



West Virginia Legislature
Office of Reference & Information
Journalism Internship Program

Application Packet – 2027 Regular Session

West Virginia Legislature's Office of Reference & Information
Joint Committee on Government & Finance
www.wvlegislature.gov/educational/internship

Legislative Journalism Internship

Goals of the Program

The Legislative Journalism Internship program is sponsored by the Legislature. The primary goal of the program is to provide students with the experience of covering legislative action and interacting with the public in a civil servant role. Interns gain a repertoire of writing to use when applying to jobs postgraduation. Additionally, interns gain an understanding of the Legislative Process and the multiple roles within the Legislature.

Office History

Established in 1976 by the West Virginia Legislature's Joint Committee on Government and Finance, the Public Information Office was given the charge to respond to citizen and media inquiries.

To prevent duplicative efforts regarding research gathering, retrieval, and dissemination of legislative information, legislative leadership combined the information office with the legislative library in 1989, thereby establishing the West Virginia Office of Reference & Information. Today, the blog, Wrap Up, and other legislative publications are only part of this office. The office also includes photography. Photos are taken during the legislative session to commemorate the civic contributions made by various organizations and community groups, academic and athletic achievements of state citizens, acts of local bravery, and educational visitations of children on school trips, among other presentations. Additionally, the office maintains the official legislative website and social media presence, and as such, all legislative informational materials and news releases are placed on the Internet to enhance public access and participation.

A division of the Joint Committee on Government and Finance, the office is apolitical and nonpartisan and works for all 134 members of the West Virginia Legislature.

The Office of Reference & Information consists of a public information director, information officers, web developers, a photographer, a graphic designer, and a resource manager. All members of this office collectively work to secure and distribute data relevant to the lawmaking process.

During legislative sessions, two (2) interns may be employed by the office to strengthen the structure of the supportive team effort. Assigned responsibilities are equal to those of fulltime staff.

Student Selection

To be eligible for the Legislative Journalism Internship, a student must be a sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student at an **accredited school of journalism** in West Virginia. Interns must have a GPA of 3.0 or greater and be in good academic standing for the semester in which they will be an intern.

Length of Internship

The internship begins in January and runs through mid-April.

Assignments

Interns will be treated as fulltime staff by covering floor sessions and committee meetings of both the House and the Senate. Each day, committee meetings will be divided up between public information officers and interns. If interns have a specific committee interest, we can arrange for assignments to meet those interests. Interns will produce daily blogs, bill summaries, and other publications related to legislative action. Interns will respond to citizens' requests via telephone, mail, or email. Additionally, interns may enter photographic constituent data.

Credit

Upon successful completion of the legislative internship program, students will receive up to six (6) credit hours toward their degree. Public Information interns will need enroll in other classes that will not interfere with the responsibilities of this internship. (For example, while independent study courses, reading courses, and courses of that nature are allowed, classes which require attendance more than one evening per week are prohibited because of the scheduling flexibility required of all Interns during the legislative session.)

Additionally, interns may enroll in the Seminar in Public Service, which is offered to interns and taught at the Capitol once a week. Enrolling in this course provides interns with an additional three (3) hours in political science as an elective. Interns should speak with the university advisor and internship coordinator to determine if they need to enroll in this course.

Note: Students interested in participating in this internship should meet with their university advisor and internship coordinator to verify receipt of credit hours, as well as investigate other educational requirements established by the schools of journalism.

Stipend

Each Journalism Intern receives a stipend of \$1,300 per month, paid biweekly (\$5,200 total).

Orientation

Each year, interns participate in a comprehensive legislative orientation at the start of the internship. Some orientation activities are general and therefore have been combined for legislative interns participating in all the Legislature's internship programs. Basic activities include tours of the Capitol and legislative offices; meetings with key legislators and legislative staff; introductions to bill drafting, the committee system, the Code of State Laws, legislative research, parliamentary procedure, the legislative computer system, etc. Additional orientation activities may be planned specifically for the Journalism Internship Program.

Daily Schedule

Historically, during the first several weeks of the Regular Session, the West Virginia Legislature's Office of Reference & Information business hours are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm daily. However, during the midtolatter weeks of the session, interns may be required to report to the Capitol early in the mornings, to stay late into the evenings, and/or to work weekends. As the Session nears its close, the workload and working pace increase significantly. No intern will be excused from the responsibilities of this office to participate in other studies while the Legislature is convened in floor sessions or any other legislative activity within the Capitol Building, in addition to the "normal" office hours. While certain absences may be unavoidable and therefore excused, frequent missed work hours will result in removal from the internship program.

Accommodations/Transportation

Housing, meals, and daily transportation to and from the State Capitol are the responsibilities of the student interns. Please note: Furnished and unfurnished apartments are typically available for shortterm rental in the "Historic East End" of Charleston, located within walking distance of the Capitol. The Internship Committee can provide a list of other legislative interns who are seeking roommates to share housing during their stay in Charleston. (In past years, many legislative interns have roomed together and successfully reduced their living expenses.)

Charleston offers frequent bus service for those without personal vehicles who choose to live outside walking distance of the Capitol. In addition, many past interns have formed informal carpool systems. For those not within walking distance, parking permits are available to interns during the 60day legislative session. Additionally, there is street parking as well.

As for food, the Capitol maintains a cafeteria (open for breakfast and lunch) and a few vending machines.

Contact Information

Should there be any questions about the application procedure for this student internship program, please contact the Legislature's Office of Reference & Information.

Journalism Internship Program Coordinator

Cheyenne DeBolt cheyenne.debolt@wvlegislature.gov
3043474833

Applications can be mailed to intern@wvlegislature.gov with the subject line "Journalism Internship." **BY NOVEMBER 1, 2026**

Application Checklist

Students interested in the internship program should discuss the program with their academic advisors to ensure that potential participation will fit into their graduate education plans and complement their future career goals.

To apply for the Journalism Internship Program, students must submit to the Legislative Internship Committee the following:

(If I have not placed a check mark beside an item on the list, I have written in the margin an explanation of why that document is not included in the envelope.)

- ___ Completed application form
- ___ Statement on my interest in becoming a graduate student intern with the Legislature
- ___ Two academic letters of recommendation (*strengths and weaknesses in professional and personal skills assist the selection committee*)
- ___ One character letter of recommendation (*nonrelative*)
- ___ Three (3) writing samples (*or project, article, or the like*)
- ___ Brief explanation of why you submitted this research paper
- ___ Sealed copies of transcripts
- ___ Submitted in one email to intern@wvlegislature.gov with “Legislative Journalism Internship” in the subject line **BY NOVEMBER 1, 2026**
- ___ Speak with advisor and coordinator about course registrations and credits, as well as remaining a fulltime student.

Application
West Virginia Legislative Journalism Internship

I. Contact Information

Name:

LAST

FIRST

MIDDLE

Campus Address:

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Permanent Address:

Birthdate:

II. Resume

College or University: _____

Year of Study: Sophomore Junior Senior Grad. School

Major: _____ Minor: _____

Current Cumulative GPA: _____ Expected Graduation Date _____

Academic Awards/Achievements:

Extracurricular Activities:

Work Experience, paid or volunteer (Dates, Employer, Responsibilities)

Have you ever been charged with a felony? Yes _____ No _____

May we perform a background check on you? Yes _____ No _____

III. Essay

Essay: Please attach a brief statement describing your qualifications, career goals, and reasons for applying for the Legislative Journalism Internship.

IV. Writing Samples

Writing Samples: Applicants must submit three (3) of their most recent written material.

V. Transcripts

Transcripts: Applicants must submit OFFICIAL copies of undergraduate/graduate transcripts.

VI. References

References: Provide information for those you've requested to send letters of recommendation on your behalf. Two should be letters of recommendation from your college or university faculty who are aware of your academic performance. One should be a character reference from outside the academic setting.

Name	Email	Phone
Faculty Reference		
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
Character Reference		
3. _____	_____	_____
Emergency		
Name: _____		
Phone Number: _____		

Please submit the application and all required documents to intern@wvlegislature.gov with Subject Line “Legislative Journalism Internship” by NOVEMBER 1, 2026.

Additional Information

1. Should you have any questions about the application procedure or other issues related to the Legislative Journalism Internship, please contact Cheyenne DeBolt.
Cheyenne DeBolt
304-357-4833
cheyenne.debolt@wvlegislature.gov
2. For general information about the West Virginia Legislature (including information about the internship programs), please visit the Legislature's website at <https://www.wvlegislature.gov/>
3. Applicants are advised to keep copies of their application materials.
4. It is the responsibility of the applicants to review and understand the academic requirements of the institution they attend, including course credit, minimum grade point average, and any other requirements instituted by their college or university. All applicants are recommended to speak with their academic advisor to ensure all academic requirements are fulfilled while participating in this internship program.
5. The Legislature seeks to attract a diverse pool of applicants for the Legislative Journalism Program. No applicant will be discriminated against because of race, gender, age, physical disability, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnic/national origin.