The Tri-County Health Department Dietetic Internship Program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics
the accrediting agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

6162 S. Willow Drive, Suite 101 Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Tri-County Health Department

Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) founded in 1948, is the largest local public health agency in Colorado, serving over 1.5 million people in Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties. The agency's jurisdiction includes 26 municipalities and 3 unincorporated counties, 15 school districts, 12 acute care hospitals, 3 Federally Qualified Health Clinics (FQHC), 3 community mental health service entities, 3 early childhood councils and 1 Regional Collaborative Care Organization.

TCHD seeks to positively impact the health of our residents through three approaches: 1) Address the Needs of Vulnerable Populations; 2) Preventing the Spread of Disease and Ensuring Health Human Environments; and 3) Impacting Population Health through Policy and Partnerships. The TCHD three county jurisdiction spans across 3,000 square miles.

Agency Vision: Optimal health across the lifespan for the populations we serve.

Agency Mission: Promote, protect and improve the lifelong health of individuals and communities in Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties through the effective use of data, evidence-based prevention strategies, leadership, advocacy, partnerships and the promotion of health equity.

Diversity: Tri-County Health Department values and welcomes people of all ages; ethnicities; genders and gender identities/expressions; sexual orientations; languages spoken; nationalities and cultures; physical, mental and developmental abilities; races; religions; and socio-economic, insurance and immigration status. It’s a strong statement of our core value of respect and our ongoing intent to welcome all who need the services that you so capably provide.

TCHD Public Health Improvement Plan (PHIP)

In line with our mission, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Essential Public Health Services, and Colorado’s Public Health Improvement Act of 2008, following our Community Health Assessment, TCHD and our community partners periodically work together create a Public Health Improvement Plan (PHIP). The purpose of the plan is to organize and coordinate a systematic effort to address the top health issues identified in the Community Health Assessment and prioritized by our partners, our community members, and our staff. While the Public Health Improvement Act requires that Local Public Health Agencies, such as TCHD, update their PHIPs
every five years, the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment allowed us to slightly modify this timeframe and instead design a six-year plan with a review and update after three years. This timeframe allows us the flexibility to align our work with that of a key segment of our community partners – our not-for-profit hospitals – who develop Community Benefit Plans every three years.

Our 2019-2024 Public Health Improvement Plan includes three primary Priority Areas and one developmental Priority Area. These include: Access to Mental and Physical Health Care Services, Mental Health, Health and Food, and, the developmental Priority Area, Health and Housing. These four Priority Areas will influence our own work at TCHD and it is our hope that we can better support and align with our partners’ work in these areas as well as influence their priorities and activities.

As encouraged by the visionary document on public health in the 21st century, Public Health 3.0, TCHD strives to play an effective role as a Chief Health Strategist for our communities, mobilizing efforts to form and strengthen strategic partnerships. We hope that by naming these issues Priority Areas, we call attention to the connection between seemingly disparate systems and population health, and that our goals and strategies are such that over the next six years we, as a community, will find that substantial progress has been made in each Priority Area. Believing that “Public Health is what we do together as a society to ensure the conditions in which everyone can be healthy,”i we look forward to working together with our partners and our community members on this, our 2019-2024 Public Health Improvement Plan.” John M. Douglas, Jr., MD

In late 2017 (a process that started in early 2015), TCHD was officially awarded Public Health Accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). It is a national recognition that demonstrates we have met the rigorous national standards in delivering quality public health services to our communities. PHAB has 12 Domains, 32, Standards, 97 Measure and approximately 300 documents needed to show demonstration of public health performance.
VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Respect
treat others as you would like to be treated/recognize work-life balance and diverse perspectives/recognize unique contributions to the team

Courage
communicate openly/welcome honest feedback/advocate for those who cannot/do what is right in the face of adversity

Excellence
strive for high quality/pursue opportunities/seek creative and innovative solutions

Leadership
believe that everyone can be a leader/empower others to act/encourage each other to reach their fullest potential

Collaboration
sustain and enhance the reach and impact of efforts through respectful engagement with community partners

Stewardship
be good stewards of public monies/facilities and strive to provide high quality, targeted cost-effective services for the community

Innovation
seek innovative approaches to address public health challenges, reach diverse communities and improve agency operation

Values for the agency are demonstrated in the behavior and decisions of all our employees and in how we conduct our efforts in the communities we serve.

Tri-County Health Department, its Board and its employees have adopted these eight core values that guide behavior, organizational policy, and decision-making. These values not only apply to how we interact with each other internally, but how we treat our partners and clients externally.
Colorado Public Health Act 2008

The Colorado Public Health Act 2008 specifically designated public health functions for health agencies in Colorado. Subsequent resolutions from each of the three Boards of County Commissioners designated TCHD as their local public health agency (LPHA) and re-authorized the Agency as it is today. In addition, on Oct. 19, 2011, the Colorado State Board of Health passed the Core Public Health Services-New Rule which requires each LPHA to deliver or assure that core public health services are provided to the community, and it also requires the agency to complete a Public Health Improvement Planning process every 5 years. This rule contains some key definitions that guide TCHD activities.

- **Core Public Health definition – Board of Health Rule:** “… shall include but need not be limited to, the assessment of health status and health risks, the development of policies to protect and promote health, and the assurance of provision of the essential public health services.”

**Core Public Health Services as defined in the Board of Health Rule**
- Assessment, Planning and Communication
- Vital Records and Statistics
- Communicable Disease Prevention, Investigation and Control
- Prevention and Population Health Promotion
- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Environmental Health
- Administration and Governance

Additionally, TCHD is guided by 10 Essential Public Health Services (1994) that provides a working definition of public health and a directorial framework for the responsibilities of local public health systems. The Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee, led by CDC, developed the framework for the Essential Services in 1994. The committee included representatives from US Public Health Service agencies and other major public health organizations. (See figure 2 below).

TCHD is committed to promoting and maintaining a learning environment as indicated by inclusion of Innovation,
Leadership, and Excellence among our Core Values. TCHD provides continuing education opportunities by division and position as well as a Tuition Reimbursement Program available to all TCHD employees. An employee may receive up to $1,750 per calendar year for professional development. This workforce development plan contributes to the overall culture of learning and performance improvement by providing a systematic guide for our employees to follow.

Employment Guidelines & Workforce Policies
TCHD Employee Handbook and workplace policies can be found online in the Public/Permanent/Human Resources folder or at the link below. All active employees have access to this file, are orientated to it upon employment, and must review and signify that they have reviewed six key policies at each performance review: Confidentiality; Conflict of Interest; Information Technology; Personal Appearance; Safety Policy; and Social Media. All employment related policies are reviewed at least annually or as need arises; additional policies will be introduced as needed. A hard copy of the Handbook and any TCHD Policy is available to any active employee upon request.


TCHD Intranet http://tchdlink.tchd.org/

TCHD Internet http://www.tchd.org/

The Nutrition Division promotes wellness across the lifespan through nutrition policy and programs to improve the nutritional health status of clients and the community.

The Nutrition Division is comprised of five different programs: WIC, Bringing WIC 2 U, Baby and Me Tobacco Free, Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, and Dietetic Internship. The division has 82 staff who serve all TCHD offices.

WIC: The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children
WIC helps to prevent nutrition-related illness and improve overall health outcomes through nutrition education, healthy foods and referrals to community resources.

- 13,917 TCHD WICs average monthly caseload
- $4,516,799 in food benefits to TCHD WIC clients, money that goes back into the local economy

Bringing WIC 2 U
A grant from the Colorado Health Foundation aims to increase WIC participation and retention in Arapahoe and Douglas Counties.

- 18% increase in WIC caseload in Douglas County
- 9 medical providers integrated in food security screening and referral processes into their electronic health record
- 9,918 WIC appointments completed at 1 co-located and 4 mobile clinic sites in Douglas and Arapahoe Counties
- 26 WIC 101 classes to medical providers and community organizations

Community Gardens
WIC partners with 371 School District in Brighton, Amazing Grace Community Church in Thornton, and Senior Hall in Northglenn to provide access to free community gardens for WIC clients and community members. Gardens work for an hour in exchange for free organic produce. Families receive education on growing a garden and how to use the various vegetables grown in the gardens.

- 144 garden volunteer hours
- 11,696 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables distributed to WIC clients and community food pantries

Breastfeeding
TCHD recognizes breastfeeding as an important and effective preventive measure to protect the health of mothers and their infants, including reduction of obesity. TCHD supports breastfeeding in our communities and continued efforts to reach Healthy People 2020 goals through trained staff at WIC clinics, a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program for peer-to-peer support, a free breast pump loan program and a free baby care drop in support group where moms can learn from breastfeeding experts and each other.

- 2,189 pumps loaned 120 Single User Pumps and 328 hand pumps given
- 26,078 client contacts with WC Breastfeeding Counselors

Baby and Me Tobacco Free
Baby and Me Tobacco Free is a smoking cessation program that helps pregnant women quit smoking and stay quit after the delivery of their baby. Participants receive smoking cessation information at four prenatal education sessions and take a carbon monoxide breath test to verify smoking status. If a woman quits smoking before delivery, she is eligible to take a breath test monthly and receive $25 worth of coupons each month up to one year as long as she stays quit.

- 120 women enrolled
- 99,073 in diapers distributed
- 88.7% of women who enrol in the program quit smoking by the time they deliver

Dietetic Internship
TCHD’s accredited dietetic internship provides a comprehensive and integrated 12-month training experience that includes direct patient care in a public health and community nutrition setting.

- 1,600 hours completed during 12 month internship
- 20.8 TCHD intern average score on the Dietetic Registration Exam - National average score is 20.0
- 100% pass rate on Dietetic Registration Exam
- The TCHD dietetic internship’s greatest strength is its diversity. Not only does the internship provide experience in the clinical, foodservice, and community sectors, but it also provides interns with experiences in nutrition research, WIC, and long-term care.
Tri-County Health Department

Vision
Optimal health across the lifespan for the populations we serve.

Mission
Promote, protect and improve the *lifelong health of individuals and communities* in Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties through the effective use of data, evidence-based prevention strategies, leadership, advocacy, and partnerships in the pursuit of health equity.

Nutrition Division

Vision
Eat healthy, be active, live well.

Mission
Partnering with the TCHD community to *promote wellness across the lifespan* through nutrition programs and policies.

Dietetic Internship

Vision
Educate, innovate and inspire future dietetic professionals.

Mission
To prepare thoughtful and competent entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists who demonstrate skills necessary for success in diverse and multi-disciplinary public health/community nutrition settings to improve the *lifelong health of individuals and communities*. 
Dietetic Internship Program Description

TCHD’s Nutrition Division first began working with dietetic students in 1980 through the six-month practice experience following attainment of a master’s degree. In 1989, the Nutrition Division completed a self-study to begin an Approved Pre-Professional Practice Program (AP4). The AP4 began accepting students in the fall of 1989. In 1994, Tri-County sought internship accreditation, which was approved in December 1995.

The internship is 45 weeks in length (beginning mid-August and ending late June) providing supervised practice and didactic learning experiences to six dietetic interns in nine rotations.

**Rotations include:**
WIC, Medical Nutrition Therapy, Clinical Pediatrics, Long-Term Care, Food Service Management, Peak Wellness Community Nutrition, Clinical research and an intern choice week. The internship has affiliation agreements with seven area hospitals and one State mental health facility for clinical, food service and pediatrics experience, four local school districts for food service rotations, four long-term care sites and one educational affiliation for the clinical research rotation. Internal to TCHD, the WIC program has 10 WIC clinics for rotations sites and TCHD’s main administrative office where many of the community/public health rotation competencies are completed.

The internship program values each dietetic intern’s diversity of characteristics they bring and contribute to the organization. A standing principle TCHD upholds is treating each intern as a TCHD employee. Our organization core values of respect, integrity, courage, excellence, leadership, collaboration, stewardship and innovation are weaved in to learning the learning process throughout the year. We strive to implement varied adult learning methods understanding that each dietetic intern synthesizes learning experiences differently. A few examples of educational and learning methods include: case studies, small group discussions, presentations, lectures, classroom trainings, computer based learning, experiential learning, field-visits, simulations, projects, writing and self-study (reading, writing and assessing). By incorporating the above, at the end of the internship period, TCHD’s interns are able demonstrate the breadth and depth ACEND is requiring to practice as an entry-level registered dietitian nutritionist.

The dietetic internship, 28 years in existence, continues to garner support from TCHD (including seven divisions within) and external partnership organization/preceptor sites. Our strengths include, a strong exam pass rate, good job acquisition rate for graduates, unique public health focus, ratio of intern to preceptor is one-to-one.
Most rotations in the internship program provide a variety of diverse experiences, strong community partnerships, and extensive training in the WIC Program. Tuition and application fees are comparable based on an analysis of other Colorado dietetic internship programs, and during some rotations, some interns are allowed meal allowances.

ACEND requires internships to have goals that reflect its mission. Objectives are established with appropriate measures to assess achievement of each of the program goals. Measures of each objective must be aligned to one or more program goals. ACEND required objectives include, program completion, graduate employment or other measure of graduate and program performance.

### Goal 1:
Program graduates are competent entry level dietetic practitioners in all ACEND required core competencies and in the concentration of public health/community nutrition.

#### Objectives
- Upon completion of the TCHD dietetic internship, at least 80% of graduates will pass the CDR examination on the first attempt. (*National First time Pass Rate*)
- At least ninety percent of TCHD interns will complete the program within one year three months which is 150% of the 10.5 month length program (*Program Completion*)
- At least fifty percent of TCHD Internship graduates, who sought employment, will obtain a professional dietetic or related position in public health/community nutrition within 12 months of program completion. (*Graduate Employment*)
- Upon completion of TCHD dietetic internship, at least 90% of graduates will rate overall program effectiveness and preparation for entry-level practice at a level of 3 or higher on a 5-point scale. (*Additional outcome data*)

### Goal 2:
Program graduates demonstrate standards of professional performance, leadership and a commitment to ongoing self-directed learning.

#### Objectives
- Utilizing a survey of employers on program graduates, 80% of respondents will indicate “above average” scores on qualities related to professional practice skills such as teamwork and contribution, communication, cultural competence and leadership.
- Utilizing a survey of graduates/alumni, 25% who respond will indicate they have enrolled in graduate school or other opportunities for professional development.
**Rotation Preceptor Sites/Partners**

**Clinical:**
- Denver Health & Hospital  [https://www.denverhealth.org/](https://www.denverhealth.org/)
- Parker/Castle Rock Adventist  [https://www.centura.org/locations/parker-adventist-hospital](https://www.centura.org/locations/parker-adventist-hospital)
- Platte Valley Medical Center  [https://pvmc.org/](https://pvmc.org/)
- Rose Medical Center  [http://rosemed.com/](http://rosemed.com/)
- St. Anthony’s  [https://www.stanthonyhosp.org/](https://www.stanthonyhosp.org/)
- Children’s Hospital of Colorado (Pediatrics’ only)  [https://www.childrenscolorado.org/](https://www.childrenscolorado.org/)

**Food Service:**
- Cherry Creek School District  [www.cherrycreekschools.org/](www.cherrycreekschools.org/)
- Douglas County School District  [https://www.dcsdk12.org/](https://www.dcsdk12.org/)
- Englewood School District  [https://www.inglewoodschools.net/](https://www.inglewoodschools.net/)

**Clinical Research:**
- University of Colorado, Children’s Hospital of Colorado  [http://www.ucdenver.edu/research/CCTSI/programs-services/ctrc/Nutrition/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.ucdenver.edu/research/CCTSI/programs-services/ctrc/Nutrition/Pages/default.aspx)

**Women, Infant and Children (WIC)**
- Tri-County Health Department  [https://www.tchd.org/291/Women-Infants-Children-WIC](https://www.tchd.org/291/Women-Infants-Children-WIC)

**Diabetes Education Program, Community Health Connectors and Healthcare Program for Children with Special Needs**
- Tri-County Health Department  [https://www.tchd.org/236/About](https://www.tchd.org/236/About)

**Long Term Care**
- Various locations
Example of Program Calendar and Rotation Track Schedule
## ACEND Required Competencies for Credentialed Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (CRDN)

### Domain One: Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: Integration of scientific information and research into practice

| CRDN 1.1: | Select indicators of program quality and/or customer service and measure achievement of objectives. |
| CRDN 1.2: | Apply evidence-based guidelines, systematic reviews and scientific literature. |
| CRDN 1.3: | Justify programs, products, services and care using appropriate evidence or data. |
| CRDN 1.4: | Evaluate emerging research for application in nutrition and dietetics practice. |
| CRDN 1.5: | Conduct projects using appropriate research methods, ethical procedures and data analysis. |
| CRDN 1.6: | Incorporate critical thinking skills in overall practice. |

### Domain 2: Professional Practice Expectations: beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the professional dietitian level of practice.

| CRDN 2.1: | Practice in compliance with current federal regulations and state statutes and rules, as applicable and in accordance with accreditation standards and the Scope of Nutrition and Dietetics Practice and Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics. |
| CRDN 2.2: | Demonstrate professional writing skills in preparing professional communications. |
| CRDN 2.3: | Demonstrate active participation, teamwork and contributions in group settings. |
| CRDN 2.4: | Function as a member of interprofessional teams. |
| CRDN 2.5: | Assign patient care activities to NDTRs and/or support personnel as appropriate. (Clinical/WIC Rotations) |
| CRDN 2.6: | Refer clients and patients to other professionals and services when needs are beyond individual scope of practice. (Clinical/WIC Rotations) |
| CRDN 2.7: | Apply leadership skills to achieve desired outcomes. |
| CRDN 2.8: | Demonstrate negotiation skills. |
| CRDN 2.9: | Participate in professional and community organizations. |
| CRDN 2.10: | Demonstrate professional attributes in all areas of practice. |
| CRDN 2.11: | Show cultural competence/sensitivity in interactions with clients, colleagues and staff. |
| CRDN 2.12: | Perform self-assessment and develop goals for self-improvement throughout the program. |
CRDN 2.13: Prepare a plan for professional development according to Commission on Dietetic Registration guidelines.

CRDN 2.14: Demonstrate advocacy on local, state or national legislative and regulatory issues or policies impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession.

CRDN 2.15: Practice and/or role play mentoring and precepting others.

**Domain 3: Clinical and Customer Services: development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations**

CRDN 3.1: Perform the Nutrition Care Process and use standardized nutrition language for individuals, groups and populations of differing ages and health status, in a variety of settings.

CRDN 3.2: Conduct nutrition focused physical exams **(Clinical Rotation)**

CRDN 3.3: Demonstrate effective communications skills for clinical and customer services in a variety of formats and settings.

CRDN 3.4: Design, implement and evaluate presentations to a target audience **(WIC Rotation)**. Intern(s) to plan, implement and evaluate a full-day WIC workshop to include; identifying topics for speaker engagements, coordinating location, set-up/tear down and evaluation for the day’s presentations and activities.

CRDN 3.5: Develop nutrition education materials that are culturally and age appropriate and designed for the literacy level of the audience.

CRDN 3.6: Use effective education and counseling skills to facilitate behavior change.

*This competency will also be in the Clinical and WIC Rotation.*

CRDN 3.7: Develop and deliver products, programs or services that promote consumer health, wellness and lifestyle management.

CRDN 3.8: Deliver respectful, science-based answers to client questions concerning emerging trends.

CRDN 3.9: Coordinate procurement, production, distribution and service of goods and services, demonstrating and promoting responsible use of resources. **(Food Service Rotation)**

CRDN 3.10: Develop and evaluate recipes, formulas and menus for acceptability and affordability that accommodate the cultural diversity and health needs of various populations, groups and individuals.

*This competency will also be in the Food Service, Clinical Research, WIC and potentially Long Term Care and Option Week Rotations.*

**Domain 4: Practice Management and Use of Resources: strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and organizations**

CRDN 4.1: Participate in management of human resources.
| CRDN 4.2: Perform management functions related to safety, security and sanitation that affect employees, customers, patients, facilities and food. |
| CRDN 4.3: Conduct clinical and customer service quality management activities. *(Food Service Rotation)* |
| CRDN 4.4: Apply current nutrition informatics to develop, store, retrieve and disseminate information and data. |
| CRDN 4.5: Analyze quality, financial and productivity data for use in planning. |
| CRDN 4.6: Propose and use procedures as appropriate to the practice setting to promote sustainability, reduce waste and protect the environment. |
| CRDN 4.7: Conduct feasibility studies for products, programs or services with consideration of costs and benefits. |
| CRDN 4.8: Develop a plan to provide or develop a product, program or service that includes a budget, staffing needs, equipment and supplies. |
| CRDN 4.9: Explain the process for coding and billing for nutrition and dietetics services to obtain reimbursement from public or private payers, fee-for-service and value-based payment systems. |
| CRDN 4.10: Analyze risk in nutrition and dietetics practice *(Clinical and WIC Rotations)*. |

**Public Health/Community Nutrition Concentration**

| **TCHD 1:** | Participate in development and evaluation of community-based food and nutrition programs |
| **TCHD 2:** | Conduct original community-based research, utilizing nutrition surveillance and monitoring systems as appropriate to inform research projects and provide framework for action |
| **TCHD 3:** | Participate in the grant writing process |
| **TCHD 4:** | Collaborate with food security organizations, *pantries, farmers market or community gardens* to promote access to healthy foods for target populations. *(added pantries/gardens 2018)* |
| **TCHD 5: (WIC Rotation)** | Obtain extensive WIC training and full Certified WIC Authority status, including lactation management skills; Interns will complete all levels of the Colorado WIC certification program (must obtain score of 90% or higher on module tests) and will teach at least one breastfeeding class. |
| **TCHD 6: (WIC Rotation)** | Demonstrate client-centered counseling skills resulting in appropriate goal setting for behavior change; Interns will be able to assist clients in WIC and Peak Wellness with setting behavior change goals by the end of these rotations, as evidenced by counseling observations/evaluation forms. |
| **TCHD 7:** | Apply key public health principles to nutrition practice (and interdisciplinary practice) at local health department |
| **TCHD 8:** | Engage in and teach food preparation, ranging from gardening and grocery shopping to cooking and recipe modification |
| **TCHD 9:** | Prepare interactive learning plans and facilitate group nutrition education sessions |
Policies and Procedures

According to ACEND (2017) Accreditation Standards Nutrition and Dietetic Internship (DI) Programs must have written policies and procedures that protect the rights of interns and are consistent with current institutional practice. ACEND required elements for policies and procedures include:

10.1 Programs are required to have policies and procedures for program operations including:
   a. Admission Requirements: Programs must establish criteria to determine intern potential for success in the program.
   b. Intern Performance Monitoring: The program’s system of monitoring intern performance must provide for the early detection of academic difficulty and must take into consideration professional and ethical behavior and academic integrity of the intern.
   c. Intern Retention: Interns with a minimal chance of success in the program must be counseled into career paths that are appropriate to their ability.
   d. Supervised Practice Documentation: The program must establish procedures for tracking individual intern’s supervised practice hours in professional work settings, simulation, case studies and role playing. Hours granted for prior learning, if given, also must be documented.

10.2 The following policies and procedures specific to nutrition and dietetics programs must be provided to interns, such as in a program handbook or on a program website. Programs offering tracks must document policies that differ between each track:
   a. Insurance requirements, including those for professional liability.
   b. Liability for safety in travel to or from assigned areas.
   c. Injury or illness while in a facility for supervised practice.
   d. Drug testing and criminal background checks, if required by the supervised practice facilities.
   e. Requirement that interns doing supervised practice must not be used to replace employees.
   f. When interns are paid compensation as part of the program, policies must be in place to define the compensation practices.
   g. The process for filing and handling complaints about the program from interns and preceptors that includes recourse to an administrator other than the program director and prevents retaliation. The program must maintain a record of intern complaints for a period of seven years, including the resolution of complaints.
   h. Process for submission of written complaints to ACEND related to program noncompliance with ACEND accreditation standards after all other options with the program and institution have been exhausted.
   i. If the program grants credit, supervised practice hours or direct assessment for interns’ prior learning, it must define procedures for evaluating equivalence of prior education or experience. Otherwise, the program must indicate that it has no policy for assessing prior learning or competence.
   j. Formal assessment of intern learning and regular reports of performance and progress.
   k. Program retention and remediation procedures; interns must have access to remedial instruction such as tutorial support.
l. Disciplinary/termination procedures.

m. Graduation and/or program completion requirements for all tracks and pathways including maximum amount of time allowed for completing program requirements applicable at the time intern enrolls.

n. Verification statement requirements and procedures ensuring that all interns completing requirements established by the program receive verification statements.

o. Programs using distance instruction and/or online testing must employ strategies to verify the identity of an intern.

p. Withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees, if applicable.

q. Program schedule, vacations, holidays and leaves of absence.

r. Protection of privacy of intern information, including information used for identifying interns in distance learning.

s. Intern access to their own intern file.

t. Access to intern support services, including health services, counseling and testing and financial aid resources.

Reference:
http://www.eatrightpro.org/~/media/eatrightpro%20files/acend/about%20program%20accreditation/accreditation%20standards/2017standardsfordiprograms.ashx
Interns are required to know and comply with Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures and the TCHD Policies and Procedures as a condition of participation in the TCHD Dietetic Internship Program.

1.1 Ethical Intern Conduct
All interns in the Department are expected to abide by the highest ethical standards in their activities in and for the Department or any affiliations connected with the program. Interns will follow the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Dietetics.

1.2 Civil Rights
Intern positions in the Department are filled on an equal opportunity basis by qualified persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability, according to departmental policy. Clients are provided services without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.

1.3 Working Conditions and Physical Requirements
Work is primarily conducted indoors with occasional time spent in an outdoor environment. Intern will experience routine exposures and hazards of a typical office environment and the frequent noise associated with a family clinic. Will require travel between TCHD offices and to locations in the community for conducting educational presentations and attending meetings. Intern may occasionally work outside normal hours to attend meetings, teach classes and complete assignments.

1. Requires sufficient hearing and speech ability to communicate verbally in response to inquiries, complaints, and to speak to groups of people in an informational or training situation.
2. Requires ability to lift and carry objects occasionally up to 49 pounds.
3. Requires manual dexterity to operate computer and office equipment and anthropometrics equipment.
4. Requires the ability to sit and perform administrative and computer work for significant periods of time.
5. Frequent use of automobile, usually no more than one hour at a time.
6. Requires physical capabilities to operate home or commercial kitchen equipment for basic food preparation.
7. Visual and physical capabilities to work on computers, utilize anthropometric equipment, keyboard, file, write notes, prepare PowerPoint presentations and visual displays.
1.4 **Confidential Information**
Interns have access to client files and medical records. All information contained in medical or clinical records of the Department is confidential. Release of these records to an attending physician or to a medical institution must be by written permission of the individual. Records will not be released to any other person except by court order. Violation of TCHD’s confidentiality/HIPAA policies may result in the intern’s termination from the program. For additional information, please refer to pgs. 31-32 of the TCHD Employee Handbook.

1.5 **Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks**
Interns will be required to complete a drug or background check.

1.6 **Religious Beliefs**
Health Department interns will not be required to perform duties that are in conflict with the intern’s religious beliefs. A religious holiday that is not a recognized TCHD holiday may be taken off with prior approval of the Internship Manager. The intern must use a floating leave day or arrange with the Internship Manager and preceptor to make up the time.

1.7 **Personal Appearance and Conduct**
Professional dress, neatness, care toward personal hygiene, concern and interest in the goals of the Department and a willing, cooperative attitude to associates and the public are both expected and appreciated. Being pleasant, courteous and helpful to citizens, outside contacts and coworkers is an important part of each intern’s job. No uniforms are required, but interns are expected to abide by the Department’s personal appearance policy and may be requested to supply a lab coat for affiliating hospitals.

1.8 **Name Tags and Badges**
Interns will be issued a nametag and badge upon beginning their program. Lost nametags/badges must be reported to the Internship Manager. If nametags are lost, interns will be responsible for replacement costs.

1.9 **Holidays**
Interns may observe all regular* agency holidays.

1. New Year’s Day
2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
3. Presidents’ Day
4. Memorial Day
5. Independence Day  
6. Labor Day  
7. Veterans Day  
8. Thanksgiving Day  
9. Friday after Thanksgiving Day  
10. Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on Saturday, the Friday preceding will be observed as a holiday. If a holiday falls on Sunday, the Monday following will be observed as a holiday.

*While at affiliating hospitals/external rotation sites, interns will observe the holiday schedule for that institution. This means interns may be required to work on some TCHD recognized holidays.

1.10 Work Week
The work week and daily working hours will be collaboratively determined by the Internship Manager and dietetic intern based on the needs of the Division programs and services. TCHD business hours are Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–5:00 PM. Unless otherwise directed, interns are expected to attend during these hours.

1.11 Sick Leave
Sick leave is granted on an individual basis depending on need (see 1.15) Time missed in excess of that outlined in 1.15 must be made up.

1.12 Emergency Leave
Emergency leave must be arranged with the Internship Manager (see 1.15). Time missed in excess of that outlined in 1.15 must be made up.

1.13 Educational Leave
Educational leave will be granted at the discretion of the Internship Manager.

1.14 Time and Activity Coding
Every intern will enter time and activity coding each week that will be reviewed and approved by the Internship Manager. The coding tracks work activity information.

|\TCHD Policies-Forms\Timesheet codes for DI.doc|

1.15 Time Off/Missed
Each intern will be granted 10 days of vacation leave during the internship (December 23, 2019-January 3rd, 2020) plus 2 vacation days for a “spring break” in March 2020. Depending upon external rotation preceptors, interns may also have time off on Holidays such as; Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King, President’s Day and Memorial Day.
All dietetic interns will have two floating leave days. The 16 hours of floating leave may be used for time off due to illness, emergency, doctor's appointments or any other personal time off, if needed. Leave will be granted on an individual basis.

Special leave in excess of the six days above will be granted on an individual basis for reasons of serious illness/condition, pregnancy, childbirth, family death or other emergency. **Time missed from the internship as a result of special leave will need to be made up based on approved plan by Internship Manager for completion the internship and to be issued a Verification Statement.** All leave must be approved by the Internship Manager. Interns must submit leave requests in writing prior to taking leave, using a DI leave request form.

1.16 **Injury in a Facility for Supervised Practice**

Injury while in a facility for supervised practice should be reported immediately to the preceptor and Internship Manager. Interns are covered by Tri-County Health Department worker's compensation insurance if injured in an internship related facility.

1.17 **Liability for Safety in Travel to or from Assigned Areas**

All intern travel to or from assigned clinics or work related responsibilities is not covered by the agency liability insurance policy, and mileage will not be reimbursed. Interns are required by state law to have appropriate liability insurance for their automobiles. Interns will be responsible for maintaining their auto insurance to cover any liabilities encountered while in travel status. Proof of insurance must be submitted to the Internship Manager at the beginning of the internship. Interns are responsible for any and all affiliation parking expenses.

1.18 **Violations, Traffic**

Interns are responsible for any traffic violations and/or fines they incur.

1.19 **Insurance Requirements**

Interns must apply for Professional Liability Insurance for Individual Students prior to starting this program. This policy covers both malpractice and personal liability. Health, automobile or any other insurance is the responsibility of the intern. Interns must have health insurance to participate in the internship.
1.20 Public Relations
If contacted by news media, interns will refer the request for information to the Nutrition Division Director and/or the Public Information Officer at TCHD.

P:\Permanent\Human Resources\Policies\Social Media Policy.pdf

1.21 Special Talks
Interns are advised to not answer questions about Departmental policy, appear on any programs, or give any public talks relating to the Department without prior approval of the Nutrition Division Director and/or Internship Manager.

1.22 Photographs
No photographs of patients or other persons receiving services from the Health Department may be used unless there is a release signed by the individual or individuals in the photograph. Release forms can be accessed on the Public Drive of the TCHD network.

P:\Permanent\Photo Release Form\Photo release form April 2014.pdf

1.23 Long Distance Telephone Calls
Long distance calls or faxes using TCHD equipment must be pre-approved by the Internship Manager. A TCHD long-distance PIN number may be issued to interns for business purposes as needed.

1.24 Court Service as a Witness
Interns called to court to act as a witness in a job-related or non-job-related trial will be granted a special leave of absence.

1.25 Political and Religious Activity
This policy in no manner prohibits membership in any political or religious organization, attendance at meetings, expression of views on political matters, nor voting with complete freedom. Interns are, in fact, encouraged to actively support their individual political beliefs so long as these opinions are not represented to others as the official viewpoint of this Department.

A. Interns may not be partisan candidates for political office.
B. Interns may not use their position with the Department to promote any specific political action, candidate or belief.
C. Interns may not use official Department letterhead for personal or political correspondence.
D. Interns may not use their Department titles in either written or verbal communications concerning religious or political activities/beliefs.
E. Interns shall not attempt, through any means, to coerce other interns, TCHD employees or volunteers into working for or accepting their religious or political beliefs or candidates.
F. Political literature may not be displayed nor distributed on Department premises.
G. Department funds may not be used to purchase political literature or to support any candidate or
Religious material, literature, petitions or statements may not be circulated in Department buildings.

Religious activities are not allowed on the premises of or in the buildings of the Department.

1.26 Authorized Use of Department Equipment

All Department equipment will be used only for the Department activities. No private use of Department equipment will be authorized except with special permission of the Director of Nutrition Division or Director of Administrative Services.

1.27 Use of Petty Cash

One time withdrawals of the petty cash fund shall not exceed $20.00. Petty cash is dispersed by the nutrition division secretary. Sales tax is not reimbursed. You may be provided with Tri-County’s tax exemption number before making internship-related purchases. Interns needing reimbursement for department expenses must submit receipts to the nutrition secretary, after obtaining the approval and signature of the internship manager.

1.28 Supplies

All requests for forms, supplies, materials, books, educational materials, etc., must be in writing and directed to the Internship Manager.

1.29 Intern File

The intern’s personnel file will be maintained in a confidential manner with access only to authorized personnel, including the Nutrition Division Director, Internship Manager and the intern.

1.30 Resignation

In order to resign in good standing, interns shall submit a written notice to the Internship Manager at least 10 days before the effective date of the resignation indicating the reason(s) for the resignation. After acceptance by the Internship Manager, the letter of resignation shall be placed in the intern's personnel file. No money will be refunded.

1.31 Probation for Unsatisfactory Performance

When an intern demonstrates unsatisfactory performance after starting the program, the Internship Manager, after doing a special evaluation documenting the deficiencies, will request the Nutrition Division Director to place the intern on probation. The Nutrition Division Director, upon approval of the Internship Manager request, will issue a notice to the intern specifying the probationary period. If the intern is not at a satisfactory level by the end of the probationary period, s/he will be given one week's notice and dismissed. No money will be refunded.
**1.32 Suspension or Dismissal**

The Internship Manager may recommend and the Nutrition Director may dismiss or suspend any intern for disciplinary reasons, examples of which follow:

A. Arriving at work in an intoxicated state or becoming intoxicated while on the job. This includes being under the influence of either drugs or alcohol.
B. Theft of Department property or property of an employee or other intern.
C. Harassing (sexually or otherwise), threatening, intimidating or assaulting an employee or other intern.
D. Falsifying Department records or revealing unauthorized information from confidential records.
E. Possession of weapons or firearms on Department premises.
F. Failure to follow orders of one’s supervisor or director.
G. Being absent without permission or not having advised one’s supervisor.
H. Being habitually absent or tardy.
I. Disregard of safety rules or failure to wear required safety equipment.
J. Failure to report a job-related injury or accident.
K. Failure to perform assigned work efficiently.
L. Inability or unwillingness to work harmoniously with other interns, students or employees.
M. Being wasteful of material, property or working time.
N. Conviction of a felony.
O. Accepting bribes or gifts.
P. Failure to comply with TCHD policies as outlined during orientation.
Q. Other conduct which is unbecoming to a public employee.

Summary Dismissal—In the event an intern’s performance or attitudes are flagrantly out of line with Departmental policy or procedure and the intern has been previously apprised of these and counseled about them, or in the event an intern has consciously or through gross negligence caused serious damage to the Department or its programs, and in either case, in the opinion of the Nutrition Division Director, retention of the intern would be harmful to the Department, the Nutrition Division Director may dismiss the intern summarily and without notice.

**1.33 Grievance Procedure**

The following procedure will be adhered to by interns presenting a grievance:

A. If the immediate supervisor and Internship Manager are unable to settle the difficulty within three working days, the grievance shall be referred to the Nutrition Division Director for resolution.
B. The grievance shall be presented in writing by the aggrieved intern to the Nutrition Division
Director. Note: In the event the grievance concerns the Nutrition Division Director, the complaint may be lodged directly, in writing, with the TCHD Executive Director.

C. Within seven working days after receipt of the intern’s written statement of grievance, the Nutrition Division Director or the Executive Director shall render a decision in writing and shall cause a copy of the decision to be delivered to the intern.

D. It is the intent of this procedure to provide the prompt and equitable settlement of problems or misunderstandings that may arise.

E. If after the above proceedings have taken place, the aggrieved intern is still dissatisfied with the results, it is his or her right to lodge a formal complaint through local, state or federal civil rights commissions.

1.34 Employee Replacement

Interns will not replace employees for any staff work, unless staff work is related to the program requirements. All learning activities and rotation schedules will be dictated by the Internship Manager to the preceptors.

1.35 Commendations

Outstanding contributions to the Department’s activities may be recognized by the initiation of a commendation letter by the Internship Manager and the Nutrition Division Director. The commendation will be furnished to the intern and a copy placed in the intern’s file.

1.36 Evaluation

The intern will be evaluated at the end of each rotation and in the final week before finishing the program. These evaluations will be conducted by the TCHD or Affiliation Preceptor, Internship Manager or Nutrition Division Director.

1.37 Graduation or Program Completion Requirements

Interns are evaluated on a point system. Completion of the program is contingent on satisfactory completion of all assignments at the level (#2 rating on rotation checklist) of an entry-level dietitian. When the intern has met all the objectives, s/he will receive a Certificate of Completion and signed Verification Statement. If specific activities are not satisfactorily completed, the intern will continue in the program until defined competence is met.

1.38 Verification Statements

Upon completion of the program, a verification statement will be submitted to CDR for RDN
examination eligibility.

1.39 **Sign-in/out Sheets**  (N/A) No longer in place at TCHD Admin Office
Sign-in/out sheets will be maintained at the receptionist's desk of each office in order to facilitate the handling of telephone calls, visitors, and emergency situations. **Interns are required to sign in and out of each office as they arrive and leave, including lunchtime if they leave the building.**

1.40 **Telephone Messages**
Interns will have individual voice mailboxes to record phone messages. Interns are encouraged and expected to check voicemail and return phone calls in a timely fashion and to keep their outgoing message consistent with professional standards.

1.41 **Intern Support Services**
Interns are eligible to obtain selected immunizations at the customary agency fee at the convenience of the TCHD Employee Health Nurse. Seasonal influenza and Hepatitis B vaccinations are provided free of charge by TCHD, as are any additional immunizations and lab testing required by affiliating facilities prior to a rotation. Interns have access to TCHD's family planning services, human resources, nursing services, and employee assistance plan services. Some hospitals and affiliations provide free or reduced-cost meals to interns.

1.42 **Previous Work Experience Credit**
Interns with previous work experience in a particular area may submit a written proposal to the Internship Manager to substitute a portion of the rotation practice experience with another comparable quality learning experience. The replacement experience must be presented in detail along with preceptor approval. The proposal must include a statement verifying the intern's work experience from the intern's employer. The intern's application will be evaluated by the Internship Manager and nutrition division director.

1.43 **Recency of Education**
It is the policy of TCHD to train competent practitioners in dietetics. Recency of education is an important aspect of intern training. Applicants to the internship holding degrees completed five years or more prior to application to the internship will be required to submit in writing to the Internship Manager proof of recent course work in the field of dietetics (such as medical nutrition therapy and biochemistry) and/or adequate work experience in the field of dietetics. Approval of course work/work experience will be at the discretion of the Internship Manager. Course work and/or work experience must be completed within the last five years and before beginning the internship.
The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®), formerly known as the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) is the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for careers as registered dietitian nutritionists (RDN) or dietetic technicians, registered (DTR). **ACEND® serves and protects students and the public by assuring the quality and continued improvement of nutrition and dietetics education programs.**

ACEND® is recognized by the United States Department of Education as a Title IV gatekeeper. This recognition affirms that ACEND® meets national standards and is a reliable authority on the quality of nutrition and dietetics education programs. ACEND® is also a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) and abides by its code of good practice. ACEND® can be contacted by email (ACEND@eatright.org), phone (1-800-877-1600 x5400), or mail (120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60606-6995).

**ACEND Procedures for Complaints against Programs**

The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) has established a process for reviewing complaints against accredited programs in order to fulfill its public responsibility for assuring the quality and integrity of the educational programs that it accredits. Any individual, for example, student, faculty, dietetics practitioner, and/or member of the public may submit a complaint against any accredited or approved program to ACEND. However, ACEND will not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admissions, appointment, promotion, or dismissal of faculty or students. It will act only upon a signed allegation that the program may not be in compliance with the accreditation standards or policies. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. Anonymous complaints will not be considered. Procedures used in the investigation of a complaint against an accredited or approved program may be viewed at [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).

**Complaints about ACEND**

Any individual, for example, student, faculty, dietetics practitioner, and/or member of the public, may submit a complaint about the standards, policies, procedures, or conduct of ACEND. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

ACEND can be reached at 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60606-6995 or 312-899-0040 x5400 or online at: [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org)
Guiding Principles
Dietetic Intern

- **The internship is a time to learn and grow.**
  Be open to new information, ideas, experiences, approaches and ways of accomplishing things. Even when the value of the experience may not be immediately evident at that point in time, it may become valuable later on. Or if the new information may be in conflict with beliefs or prior experiences, learn from them.

  Be prepared and eager to learn what the curriculum prescribes, be willing to approach each new situation with openness (preceptors, staff, intern teammates can’t read minds).

  Learn when to ask questions and when to search for answers for your own learning experience. Be willing to build upon prior learning experiences and integrate new knowledge and concepts where applicable. You are not expected to know all the answers.

- **Communication is key.**
  Communicate openly, welcome constructive and honest feedback. Listen to see mutual understanding. Steer clear of gossiping or getting involved in office politics.

  Learn how you can work best with different personality types and work styles. We all bring something unique to the table.

  Greet people with a smile and avoid distracting non-verbal’s (cell phone usage in meetings/conferences). Always treat others with respect, even when you don’t share the same values or opinions.

- **Attitude, Perspective and Focus**
  Be organized and assume responsibility for your own learning. Understand and expect that situations change and may warrant different circumstances. This could periodically provide frustration, anxiety or stress. Identify and learn ways to help offset stressors or inquire help from others. Taking steps in responsibility of self (positive attitude, flexibility, and mindfulness) can assist with the adversity allowing for growth—adversity is an inevitable part of life -- seed to something positive.

  At times, expect your supervised practice experience to be time-consuming and challenging. Without challenge and stretching there is limited growth.
Connections

Look for connections between theory and practice, what is known or understood. Look for connections from trainings, workshops, meetings and link those with your experiences in other community/organizational settings.

Spend time in reflection and complete self-assessments.

Understand that you will connect with many people during the internship, young and old, different race, ethnicity, socioeconomic/education status, beliefs and values. Do your best to understand and demonstrate openness to each person.

Working in Teams

Life anchors are people (relationships help restore balance, perspective) Relationships vs. accomplishments.

Teams are everywhere. The opportunity to integrate collective thinking, talents and skills allows us to demonstrate collaborative problems solving, leadership and vision.

Model qualities like respect, helpfulness, cooperation and openness, value creativity and difference, identify each other strengths and share, build team identity, shared leadership/collaboration, hold each other accountable, trust and celebrate.

Self-Care and Balance

Take care of yourself so you can take full advantage of all the experiences that the program has to offer. Try to:

- Eat well
- Exercise
- Get enough rest, balance work and personal
- Manage your stress
- Spend time in reflection and self-assessment
- Cultivate a human perspective- benefits of humor

Time Management/Initiative

Be on time to rotations. Adhere to assigned work hours, which may be different from one facility to the next. If running late, connect with Internship Manager or preceptor (text or call).

It is up to you to manage your time and decide what projects to work on during most days. If an assignment has a deadline, be sure to follow it. Discuss with preceptors ahead of time if you are not able to make the deadline. Some deadlines may be flexible (establish priorities/manage time wisely).
Look ahead and plan meetings with upcoming preceptors/field site visits and review assignments. Be prepared for upcoming rotations. Be a self-directed learner. Get started on all assignments early. Don’t put things off until the last month of the internship! Take advantage of opportunities offered inside and outside of the organization.

Preceptors

Preceptors are an essential and integral component of dietetic internships. Without preceptors there would be limited supervised practice. Preceptors have their continued job responsibilities in addition to supporting your internship experience/education to develop your dietetic skills. We view preceptors as our organization/internship partners who help achieve the dietetic internships vision and mission.

- Think of every preceptor as a potential future employer or reference.
- Show interest and feel comfortable asking questions. Remember, we are here to help you!
- Be flexible; respond positively to changes in schedules or assignments. They will happen!
- Realize that each preceptor has his/her own style, and you can learn from all styles.
- Clarify tasks given to you so you don’t waste time. If expectations are not clear to you, ask the DI Director or preceptor what the expectations are.
- Ask for things to do. Don’t always wait to be told what to do.
- Get used to constructive feedback. You will get positive feedback as well as suggestions for growth and improvement.
- If you lack guidance, talk to the preceptor or DI director.
- Send or give a Thank You note at the end of the rotation.
Statement of Understanding for Interns in the Tri-County Health Department Dietetic Internship Program

Please initial each statement to verify that you have read and understood.

_____ I understand that I am subject to all rules and regulations set forth by the Tri-County Health Department Internship Program in regards to all academic, financial, and conduct matters which are stated in the Tri-County Health Department Dietetic Internship Handbook, as well as all rules and regulations set forth by any supervised practice facility to which I attend.

_____ I understand that Tri-County Health Department reserves the right to withdraw any student from the Dietetic Internship Program due to misconduct or unsatisfactory academic performance.

_____ I understand position fulfillment in the program is filled on an equal opportunity basis by qualified persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability. I understand that Tri-County Health Department does not discriminate in management of the program policies.

_____ I understand that I must attend all orientations related to the administration of my internship including those for supervised practice facilities. I will arrive on time and abide by rules and regulations related to the conduction of the facility.

_____ I understand that I must fulfill all financial obligations due to the Tri-County Health Department Dietetic Internship Program.

_____ I understand that to receive a verification statement to be eligible for the registration examination to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN), I must complete the program requirements as dictated by the curriculum and Internship Manager.

_____ I understand the program length and requirements and that completion does not guarantee intern will successfully pass the registration examination to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

_____ I understand the dietetic intern responsibilities, expectations and guiding principles.

I have read the statement of understanding above and hereby agree to abide by the policies contained therein.

Print Name: ______________________
Sign Name: ______________________
Date: ______________________