



GASTON COUNTY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The fellowship program is a career-development opportunity designed to attract individuals interested in pursuing a career in local government. Upon successful completion of the program, fellows will be optimally positioned to be considered for placement in a full-time role consistent with the priorities, needs, and openings in the organization at the time. This initiative supports the County Manager's commitment to enhancing Gaston County's succession planning efforts and the continuous improvement work to support a culture of innovation and performance. The program is modeled after the ICMA local government fellowship program.

Candidates are selected based on initiative, motivation, academic performance, demonstrated leadership potential, and customer service mindset, commitment to public service, communication skills, and positive attitude. Fellowship appointments are for 12 months. Assignments are determined based on county priorities and needs, workload demands, and project opportunities within departments where the utilization of a fellow can be most advantageous for both the county and the fellow. During the fellowship period, fellows will receive direct mentorship from a senior leader in the Gaston County organization.





Program Content and Design

- Program Orientation
- Education and on the job training
- Coaching and mentoring
- Networking
- Check-ins and performance evaluation

Optional Tracks

Each applicant will be asked to choose an education track on their application to help assure they gain the skills and experience they desire during their fellowship. Applicants will have the option to select a generalized Administrative track or a technical Operations track. Descriptions of each track are below.

Work Hours

Each applicant will be asked to select an employment status when completing their application. The employment statuses are as follows: Full time (30 hours +), Part time (20-29 hours per week) and Half-Time (19 hours or less a week).

Administrative Track

The Administrative track is designed to provide Fellows with an opportunity to learn, experience, and practice skills associated with the administration of local government functions. Under the mentorship and guidance of department directors and managers, the Fellows will be provided the following.

- 1.The ability to work and assume administrative leadership experience while working under the mentorship of departmental leadership.
- 2.Education on local government functions, authority, policies and processes.
- 3.Proficiencies in leading an organization, leading self and leading others.
- 4.Knowledge of organizational dynamics from working with managers in various levels of the organization.

Operations Track

The Operations track is designed to provide Fellows with hands on training in a variety of job functions within a certain department to develop technical skills associated with department operations. Skills can be developed through a variety of pathways including but not limited to job shadowing, on the job training, mentorship, and classroom training. The operations track will provide Fellows with:

- 1.Hands on experience working in a variety of areas in a department to gain valuable skills and prepare the fellow for a successful career in their chosen career field.
- 2.Opportunities to work collaboratively with departmental leadership to identify and develop projects to address the operational needs of the department.
- 3.Knowledge of organizational dynamics from working with managers in various levels of the organization.
- 4.Opportunities to develop team work and leadership skills.

Highlights

- Paid Fellowship
- Direct Involvement in Local Government
- Leadership Opportunities
- Community Impact
- Professional Networking
- Work Experience





Selection Criteria

Gaston County intends to recruit individuals who are passionate about working in local government, dedicated to improving their communities, and who are intrinsically motivated to serve. In order to create competitive talent pools, Gaston County will be offering four Fellowship opportunities per Fellowship cycle.

Essential Skills

- Highly motivated with a desire to learn
- Strong communication skills
- Ability to work well in teams
- Problem-solving skills

Minimum Qualifications

- Enrolled in an undergraduate program or possession of undergraduate degree.
- Enrolled in a graduate program or possession of a graduate degree.

Possession of a Master’s degree is preferred and fellows are encouraged to seek academic credit for the program if desired.

Other:

- Be legally able to work in the United States.
- Undergo a criminal background check and drug screening prior to participation in the program.
- Able to devote 15-40/hrs. a week for the duration of the program.

Compensation

- \$20/hour - Enrolled in a bachelor’s program or possess a bachelor’s degree, not enrolled in a master’s program.
- \$25/hour - Enrolled in a master’s program or possess a master’s degree, not enrolled in a doctorate program.

Application Process

Anyone interested in participating in the Gaston County Fellowship Program will be required to submit an application, along with supporting documents (see application). Applications will be accepted in the fall each year. Fellowships will be granted based on department availability and capacity to manage the fellow.

Gaston County Fellowship Application

It is the policy of Gaston County to provide equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, age, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other legally protected class under federal or NC State law. In addition, the Agency expressly prohibits any form of workplace harassment or discrimination.

