

Hire Houston Youth

# EMPLOYER TOOLKIT

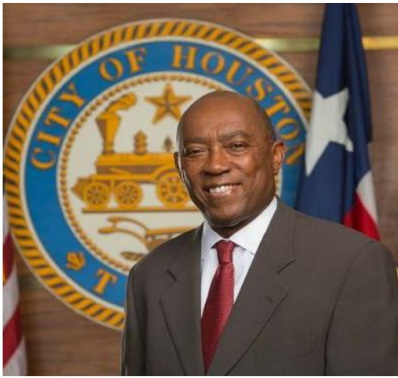
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## A Word from Mayor Turner

Last year, I asked for Houston's business community to hire youth between the ages of 16 to 24 for at least seven weeks of summer employment through our Hire Houston Youth program. My intention was to assist in connecting our youth to the dynamic local economy, so they could gain meaningful employment opportunities to develop essential workforce skills and enhance their networks and social capital. There is no greater predictor of the fiscal wellbeing of a city than the educational level of its population, and the Hire Houston Youth program is designed to empower our local youth with the ability to earn and learn over the school year and summer.

We launched Hire Houston Youth in April 2016 and had young people employed throughout the city in various capacities less than two months later. Our achievement and strength comes from our strong cross-sector partnerships and collective impact approach. For the first time in Houston's history, we have joined forces with numerous outstanding community partners including the Greater Houston Partnership, Workforce Solutions, educational institutions, and local nonprofit organizations to develop a strong, city-wide educational and workforce initiative. Through the tireless efforts of the newly created Mayor's Office of Education and cross-sector partnerships with local businesses, we provided over 1,100 summer employment opportunities for Houston's youth in 2016.

I am pleased to report that Hire Houston Youth has garnered national attention for its efforts. It was designated as a White House Summer Opportunity Hub and is presently a part of a National League of Cities study on the best practices for educational and workforce development efforts. We are a city that never quietly rests on its laurels, and Houston is ready, willing, and capable of accomplishing so much more. In this spirit, I have set an ambitious goal of 5,000 summer jobs for the summer 2017, and I need your support to make this goal a reality.

I know you are invested in the successful growth of our local economy, and an able and ready workforce is absolutely essential to ensure a strong economic future. We now stand at an important threshold in Houston's history. The demand for skilled workers outpaces our workforce supply, and our local youth need your support in connecting to local workforce opportunities.

I look forward to working with you to make a strong and impactful difference in the lives of our youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sylvester Turner'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor Sylvester Turner  
City of Houston

# INTRODUCTION

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## HIRE HOUSTON YOUTH

Hire Houston Youth is the City of Houston's official youth summer employment program. Through public-private partnerships, Hire Houston Youth provides young people ages 16 to 24 with a 7 week summer internship or employment opportunity, earning at least \$8 an hour.

Through Hire Houston Youth, Mayor Sylvester Turner seeks to address the growing deficit in meaningful summer employment opportunities for youth, equip young people with a hands-on learning experience, and provide the local business community with an opportunity to shape the future workforce.

Mayor Turner launched Hire Houston Youth in April 2016 and had young people employed throughout the city in various capacities less than two months later. Hire Houston Youth's achievement and strength comes from its cross sector partnerships and collective impact approach. The City of Houston joined forces with numerous community partners including the Greater Houston Partnership, Workforce Solutions, educational institutions, and local nonprofits to provide over 1,100 summer employment opportunities for Houston's youth in 2016.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## **What are the dates of the Hire Houston Youth program?**

Most Hire Houston Youth employment opportunities will take place between June 19 and August 4, 2017. The minimum required employment is 7 weeks to ensure youth have a meaningful experience, however employers are welcome to extend the period to how ever long they see fit. Employers hiring on-the-spot may have an earlier timeline based on the dates of the hiring events.

## **Who is responsible for paying the youth?**

Employers are expected to compensate youth employees. The only exception is nonprofit organizations who are selected to receive a subsidized intern.

## **How much do the youth get paid?**

We ask employers to pay a minimum hourly wage of \$8 per hour. Please keep in mind that this is the minimum requirement, however employers, if able, are encouraged to pay more.

## **What are the ages of youth applicants?**

Hire Houston Youth applicants are between 16 and 24 years old. Employers may set age and education requirements specific to their opportunity within the job description(s).

## **What assignments can Hire Houston Youth employees undertake?**

Employers can assign youth any task within their capability. There should be safety plans and programs in place, along with adequate supervision.

## **What about workers' compensation and general liability insurance for HHY employees?**

Youth will be covered as employees under either the company's worker's compensation or general liability insurance. Intern sponsors should consult with their insurance agents to ensure the intern is covered as an employee by the carrier. HHY staff can assist in providing guidance on questions of liability.

## **Will employers be able to interview candidates?**

Yes. Using the Hire Houston Youth platform, employers will be able to view applications directly and set up their own interviews.

## **How will youth get to work?**

Hire Houston Youth interns will provide their own transportation.

## **How will employer information be presented on the Hire Houston Youth application?**

Hire Houston Youth staff will work with HHY company liaisons to draft the employer profiles and job descriptions.

## **What kind of support can I expect from Hire Houston Youth staff?**

Hire Houston Youth staff will be available throughout the summer to provide assistance to employers, help with drafting appropriate job descriptions, solve unforeseen problems, and answer any questions you may have.

# 01

## WHY

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### **Why should my company get involved?**

Your commitment to Hire Houston Youth will create a meaningful and lasting impact on a young person, and most likely change the trajectory of his or her path in life. Youth become better prepared to excel within their workplace of education, and, in turn, will have increased opportunities for employment and education pathways.

Youth employment programs can also have a positive impact on your employees, helping them improve leadership skills, connect with their community, and deepen their pride in their employer. Your company will build and improve its talent pipeline for enhanced employee retention and performance. Your company will also demonstrate a commitment to the community while promoting workforce diversity, positioning your business as the community employer of choice.

# HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS

## Shareholders

A company's reputation for growth, attracting talent, and integrity can account for much of the 30-70% gap between the book value of most companies and their market capitalizations.

Investors consider environmental, social, and governance performance as a proxy for a company's strong management and a demonstration of a business' ability to identify risks and plan for long-term strategic growth.

## Customers

The students who dropped out of school in 2010 alone will lose over \$337 billion in wages, and an equivalent spending power over their lifetimes.

85% of consumers have a more positive image of a product or company when it supports a cause they care about.

When you support local youth employment you help build healthy communities that will buy and use your products and services.

## Current Employees

Employees who volunteer frequently are more likely to be proud, loyal, and satisfied with their jobs.

47% of surveyed executives from multinational companies cite employee satisfaction and decreased turnover as major contributors to long-term shareholder return.

## Talent Pipeline

Only 40% of employers say they have a strong pipeline of diverse talent.

53% of business leaders say their companies face a very or fairly major challenge recruiting non-managerial employees with the skills, training, and education their company needs.

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# WHO

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Hire Houston Youth interns are youth ages 16 to 24 who represent the diverse and dynamic Houston community.

A Hire Houston Youth intern is.....

a college graduate who has not yet broken into the workforce in his or her industry.

or

a self-motivated high school junior who knows what he or she wants to do in his or her career, but needs that crucial hands-on experience.

or

a graduating high school senior who is trying to match his or her interests with potential career opportunities.

or

an out of school, out of work youth looking for an opportunity to get back in the workforce.

## What are youth looking for in a job these days?

Most youth:

Like to blend work and life, challenging traditional work hours in favor of more flexible options.

Enjoy a workplace that welcomes innovation and challenges old ways of thinking.

Want equitable treatment as well as input into creating the rules.

Are tech-savvy but need training on specific software programs.

Want frequent feedback that is constructive and offered with sensitivity.



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"I can fix the potholes on our roads, but it doesn't make much of a difference if our streets are smooth but the young people who are riding or walking on our streets have potholes in their lives.

By giving them a job for the summer, we are fixing a pothole in their lives in an effort to expose the champion in all of them."

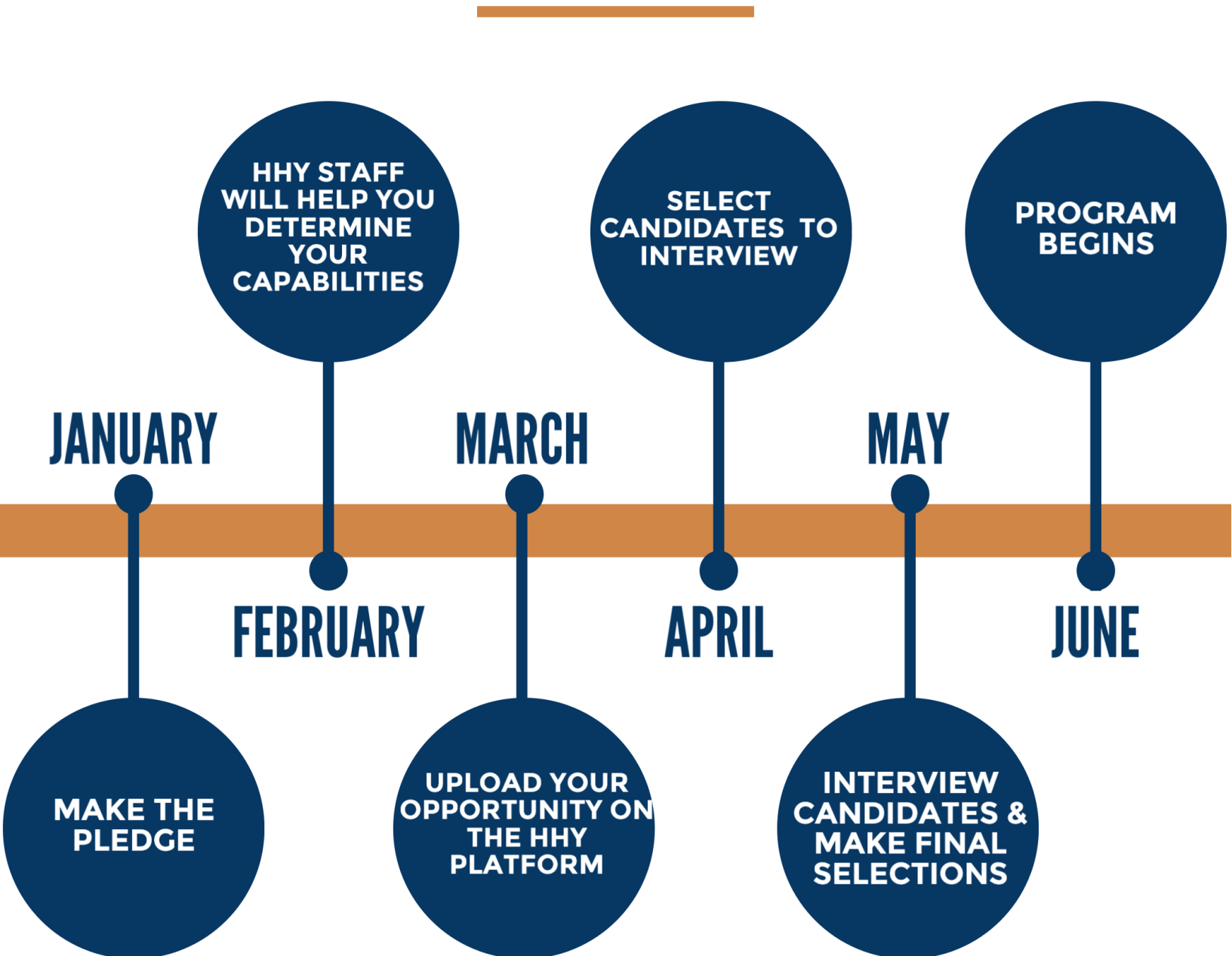
Mayor Sylvester Turner

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# 03

## THE PROCESS



# TIMELINE

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## EMPLOYERS USING THE DIGITAL PLATFORM

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<b>March 27</b>	Last day for employers to sign up for Hire Houston Youth
<b>April 3</b>	Deadline for job descriptions and employer profiles to be uploaded to the platform
<b>April 10 - May 8</b>	Youth application period
<b>May 15</b>	Applications available for employers to review
<b>May 22</b>	Deadline for employers to make interview offers, if desired
<b>May 23 - June 2</b>	Interview period
<b>June 5</b>	Deadline for employers to make internship offers
<b>June 8</b>	Deadline for youth to confirm internships
<b>June 19 - August 4</b>	Program dates

## ON-THE-SPOT EMPLOYERS

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<b>March 27</b>	Last day for employers to sign up in order to take part in an on-the-spot hiring event (beginning April 22)
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\*Dates are subject to change

# ON-THE-SPOT HIRING VS. USING THE DIGITAL PLATFORM

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Employers joining Hire Houston Youth have 2 pathways to fulfill their employment needs: 1) by participating in on-the-spot hiring events sponsored by Hire Houston Youth or 2) by using the digital platform to access pre-screened candidates. Once employers make the pledge, Hire Houston Youth staff will help employers determine their best pathway.

## On-the-spot Hiring Events

Beginning in April, Hire Houston Youth will host various on-the-spot hiring events open to all youth ages 16 and up. These events are open to the public and do not require applicants to pre-register or be pre-screened. Employment dates can begin directly after the hiring event and are flexible to the needs of employers.

### Event Schedule

**April 22** When I Grow Up Career Expo  
HISD Hattie Mae White Building

**May 20** North Houston  
Acres Homes Multi-service Center

**April 29** South Houston  
Worthing High School

**June 3** Central Houston  
George R. Brown Convention Center

**May 6** East Houston  
Magnolia Park Multi-service Center

**June 10** West Houston  
Southwest Multi-service Center

## Using the digital platform

Employers who do not normally utilize on-the-spot hiring will participate in Hire Houston Youth by accessing pre-screened candidates through the digital platform. This platform will go live when the youth application opens on April 10, 2017. Most opportunities will begin June 19, 2017 and end no sooner than August 4, 2017; however, employers are welcome to extend the period to meet their individual needs. After joining Hire Houston Youth, companies will work with HHY staff to specify their employment opportunities, craft job descriptions, and coordinate interviews with candidates. Employers also have the option of foregoing interviews and receiving pre-screened interns selected for their opportunity.

# USING THE DIGITAL PLATFORM

After you make your pledge, your Hire Houston Youth liaison will receive further instructions to create an accurate description for your job or internship opportunity and determine eligibility criteria for your intern. We will also collect details on information your intern will need to know for the first day of employment.

Once youth have applied, you will be able to view their applications, select candidates to interview (if desired), and make your final intern selections in the digital platform.

Once the internship begins, you will also be able to write notes about your intern's progress within the digital platform.

Hire Houston Youth staff will be available to answer any questions you may have throughout the process.

# APPLICANT BADGES

A badge on an application indicates the applicant has attended job readiness training with one of our partner organizations. The training consists of 4 modules designed to build and reinforce soft skills including:

- Problem solving & critical thinking
- Interpersonal communication
- Enthusiasm & attitude
- Flexibility & adaptability
- Work ethic
- Teamwork & working in diverse environments
- Ability to accept & integrate criticism and feedback.
- Time management
- Professionalism, including appropriate dress attire

# INTERVIEWING

After the application period ends, employers will have the option to set up interviews directly with candidates through the digital platform. Employers also have the option of foregoing interviews and receiving pre-screened interns selected for their opportunity.

Although the interview process for a Hire Houston Youth intern should be similar to that for any potential employee, keep in mind the youth may not have much employment experience to draw upon. Remember that skills can be learned. Focus instead on the youth's motivation and interests.

**Respecting the youth's right to privacy, here are a few questions you may want to raise:**

- What do you like to do in your free time? Any hobbies or volunteer work?
- What is/was your favorite class in school? Why?
- Tell me about a project you've worked on (could be for class, a community group, work, etc.). What was hard about that project? What was easy for you?
- Tell me why you are interested in this job.
- How comfortable are you working with customers - telephone conversations? Face-to-face contact? In a reception or customer service role?
- Is there anything else you think I should know about you?
- What are you curious about - what would you like to ask me?

# GETTING READY FOR DAY 1

Just like any new employee, your Hire Houston Youth intern needs to be introduced to your workplace and made to feel welcome. Take the time to tell them about things such as:

- 1) the company's dress code;
- 2) policies about rest breaks and lunch hours; and
- 3) socialization and personal use of technology.

**You should also consider:**

- A thorough orientation and tour.
- Assigning them an experienced mentor - someone you can trust to show them around and tell them how things work.
- Social or team-building activities that help connect the younger employee with older staff.

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## A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP

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### Components of a successful internship experience

- A corporate culture that values professional growth and development.
- An accurate job description - knowledge of the skills needed to get an entry level job in your company's industry, and the ability to teach those skills to a young person.
- Setting high expectations for your interns and helping them to meet those expectations.
- Open communication so that your intern can express concerns and learn about their progress.
- An end of the internship presentation for interns to showcase skills learned.

Regular feedback is best as it helps the intern to make adjustments, build his or her skills and gain confidence early on. Before you can evaluate your intern's performance and give helpful feedback, make sure 1) you have been clear about your expectations and have agreed on realistic goals and 2) you understand your intern's capabilities and learning needs.

### Tips

- Ask if they are having any trouble with their tasks
- Offer training and coaching where needed
- Encourage them to ask questions
- Be patient
- Reward good performance, just as you would with any of your employees

# Understanding Millennials

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Millennials are a new generation who grew up with different thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors than previous generations. Below are some common misconceptions about these youth and strategies for an effective work environment.

## 1 **Myth: Millennials are disrespectful and vocal if dissatisfied.**

**Reality:** Today's youth were raised in a less authoritarian manner than previous generations. They have always been encouraged to express their feelings and opinions and they will question everything.

**Strategy:** Engage the youth - explain how and why things are done. Provide them with opportunities to voice their opinions and share their ideas and concerns. Their respect will be earned by engaging and listening to them.

## 2 **Myth: Millennials lack a strong work ethic.**

**Reality:** Some youth may have a more casual approach to their work than their older colleagues; some have a much more active approach. This may affect the perception of their productivity and may cause tension in the workplace.

**Strategy:** Find out how they define work ethic and share your expectation. Determine what motivates them and challenge them.

## 3 **Myth: Millennials aren't loyal.**

**Reality:** Many of this generation saw their parents and grandparents downsized after years of loyal service. They are prepared to change jobs as new opportunities arise.

**Strategy:** Engage them in meaningful work that makes a difference and meets their personal goals.

## 4 **Myth: Millennials are technologically dependent.**

**Reality:** Raised in the computer age, most youth rely heavily on technology to access, collect, and share information.

**Strategy:** Use technology in new, innovative ways to provide stimulation and keep them engaged.

## 5 **Myth: Millennials lack experience.**

**Reality:** They are young and just starting out.

**Strategy:** Take the time to explain things, then step back and let them tackle the task. Return to assess the outcome, give encouragement and offer any lessons for next time.

## 6 **Myth: Millennials have a sense of entitlement.**

**Reality:** Millennials are aware of what jobs should pay and are likely to question the effort-reward equation.

**Strategy:** Be prepared to discuss wages, provide development and training opportunities and support work-life balance.



# INTERNSHIP COMPLETION

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Most internships will begin June 19 and end August 4. However, if you would like your intern to work a longer period of time, please feel free to discuss this with your intern.

Many interns benefit from an opportunity to share what they have learned throughout the internship - either through a presentation or even just a final debrief. Interns would also benefit from a performance review or recommendation letter detailing their growth during the internship.

Hire Houston Youth staff will be reaching out to you to complete an end of the program survey. If your intern is staying for a longer period of time, please complete the survey based on their summer internship.



# Thank you for ensuring Houston's economic future for generations to come.

Your partnership is essential to building tomorrow's workforce.



Mayor Sylvester Turner

