



Technical Vocational High School

Cooperative Education Student Handbook

Office of Cooperative Education, Rm. 7348

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Introduction

This handbook will help familiarize you with Madison Park Technical Vocational High School's Cooperative Education Program and will serve as a resource for you and your parents throughout your co-op experience(s). To gain the maximum benefit from co-op, please take the time to learn the policies and procedures of the program and remember that the Cooperative Education Coordinator is always available to help you with this opportunity.

What is Cooperative Education?

Co-Op is an opportunity for students to participate in off-campus paid work experiences with equal opportunity employers. Seniors and Juniors* meeting the school's and employer's requirements, work on an alternating weekly basis. The combination of alternate periods of academic study and employment in positions related to your technical program provides a work-based learning experience that enhances your studies and college and career development.

Eligibility

The Cooperative Education Program at MPTVHS is an optional opportunity for seniors and juniors who have completed a minimum 700 hours in their technical area to participate in off-campus paid work experiences. Through a cooperative arrangement between the school and equal opportunity employer, the student will receive job placement related to their technical area of study during their technical week with wages paid by the employer. To be eligible, a student must have the recommendation of their technical program teachers, meet the required grades, attendance and discipline standards. The student must also have their OSHA 10-hour card. Some technical areas may require additional certifications prior to entering the program.

- For the previous semester, must have a 2.0 GPA) average or better in all academic classes and have no failures.
- A minimum of a 3.0 GPA in the CVTE class.
- Have a 90% attendance and on-time.
- Be at least 16 years of age and have a minimum of 700 documented hours in their technical area.
- Have an OSHA-10 Hour card and other relevant safety certifications.

Preparation

Although MPTVHS offers a variety of resources to help prepare you for co-op, it is up to you to ensure your success by preparing for eligibility. This starts in your technical area and by meeting the requirements mentioned above. Beyond this, your academic classes help you sharpen your professional and academic goals, earn your OSHA 10, prepare for interviews, and write your resume.

The first step in applying for co-op is to complete application found in the CVTE Office on the 3rd floor. You will need to have your resume and OSHA 10 number on hand and attach to the application before submitting. Once your application is submitted please contact the Cooperative Education Coordinator to set up a meeting and begin further planning.

Getting a Job

Once you have met the requirements to participate in co-op, you will be eligible for referral to prospective employer partners. MPTVHS will make every reasonable effort to help find you a position, but we cannot guarantee that you will always secure a job. Working closely with the cooperative education coordinator and your technical instructors will benefit you in your co-op job search.

Working on Co-Op

At the beginning of your co-op employment, you and your supervisor will define the duties involved in your job. Your supervisor will complete the Cooperative Education Weekly Report at the close of each week which will describe your performance for the week in each area listed. This form will also include the daily hours, dates worked, total hours and week number, and must be turned in either electronically or to the cooperative education coordinator on the first day of your academic week. Additionally, the weekly journal assignment is also due by the first day of class on the academic week.

You are required to work the hours stated on the co-op calendar as a minimum (generally 24). In the rare case that an employer cannot provide the minimum hours required, you are expected to report to your technical program and inform the co-op coordinator when you arrive at school. If possible, you should provide advanced notice that you will be reporting to school.

Saturday and Sunday work hours count toward the co-op minimum, however only one Saturday and Sunday is allowed per co-op week. The hours worked must comply with the Massachusetts Child Labor Laws.

If you are sick, you must call the employer well in advance of your start time or as stated within the company's policy. When sick, your school records will be marked absent if the minimum hours for the week have not been met. The school attendance policy will apply. If you are going to be late, you must call and inform the employer. If you cannot work for any other reason than illness, i.e. family obligation, court, or a school related event, you must give your employer advanced notice. Doctor, dentist, or other non-emergency appointments should be scheduled outside of work hours.

Most employers do not observe the same holidays as school, i.e. Columbus Day, the day after Thanksgiving, etc., **be sure that you understand your work schedule during school holidays.**

Generally, employers do not recognize snow days, delays, or dismissals, therefore, you are expected to report to work. In cases of severe weather or a state of emergency the news media often shows business closures. If the roads are unplowed, slippery, or your parents object to you driving due to the hazardous conditions, stay home. Call your employer to inform them of your decision. You should offer to report to work if the conditions improve.

Employers view you as an employee, not a student. You are expected to abide to all company policies, rules, and regulations. You must also maintain a professional and courteous attitude with the employer, other employees, and customers. Failure to comply with these expectations may result in your termination.

Driving your vehicle is limited to: to and from the job site. Under 18 years of age you will not drive any vehicle for the purpose of the business. If you are over 18, driving a vehicle will be done under the supervision of the employer.

All work place injuries must be reported to the cooperative education coordinator within 24 hours of their occurrence. If the employer uses a document for this purpose, a copy should be forwarded to the co-op coordinator. Otherwise you are required to complete the school's accident report form upon your return to school. The form is available from the nurse's office,

Federal and State laws allow 16 and 17-year-old students, enrolled in Massachusetts Career and Technical High Schools, to participate in the Massachusetts Cooperative Education Program. These students are allowed to work with equipment normally considered hazardous. The agreement with the employer partner states; "The work of the student learner shall be incidental to his/her training, shall be intermittent and for short periods of time, and shall be under the direct and close supervision of a qualified and experienced person. Safety instruction given in the school shall be integrated with on-the-job training and performance."

You are required to attend periodic meetings with the co-op coordinator and your technical instructors. The purpose of these meetings will be to review your process and discuss any concerns that you may have. **Co-op eligibility is always subject to review. Students are expected to maintain grades, attendance, behavior, and attitude as described in cooperative education agreement. Failure to do so may be cause for termination from the Cooperative Education Program.**

Completing a Co-Op Job

If you decide to resign from your employment, you must meet with the cooperative education coordinator to discuss your reason(s). You are required to provide no less than a two-week notice, in writing to your employer (the employer reserves the rights to end your employment on the date of your notice). Failure to follow this process could result in a zero grade for your last co-op week.

The Cooperative Education Program at MPTVHS is a proven, effective way to enhance your high school experience and prepare you for a rapidly changing world and workplace. We wish you much success as you embark on this journey and we are proud of you and your professionalism. Keep up the great work!