NOAA EPP/MSI NERTO Protocol At A Glance

1. An approved SSIO project is the basis for the development of an approved EPP/MSI NERTO package.

2. A complete application package is submitted by the EPP/MSI Cooperative Science Center (CSC) Director to NOAA Office of Education (OED) (EPP/MSI).

3. OED EPP/MSI reviews the application package and transmits to the hosting mentor or returns to the EPP/MSI Center Director for edits.

4. Every application package must include a signed cover letter from the student. A cover letter must also be included in the package transmitted by the Center Director indicating the EPP/MSI NERTO application package has been reviewed and approved.

5. The NOAA mentor then submits a signed offer letter to OED EPP/MSI on NOAA letterhead. NOTE: The letter is not sent to the student as the student is supported in an EPP/MSI NERTO through the NOAA EPP/MSI CSC award.

6. NOAA EPP/MSI completes an administrative review of the offer letter and transmits to the Center Director or requests edits from the NOAA mentor prior to sending to the CSC.

7. The Center is required to provide EPP/MSI with a signed acceptance letter developed by the student for the EPP/MSI NERTO offer. The acceptance
letter, addressed to the NOAA mentor, **can only be transmitted to NOAA EPP/MSI by the Center Director.**

8. EPP/MSI transmits the acceptance of the offer letter to the NOAA hosting mentor.

9. The 12-week internship plan is developed **collaboratively** by the EPP/MSI Center (student, CSC Distinguished Research Scientist, academic advisor) and hosting NOAA mentor. The 12-week internship plan is sent to NOAA EPP/MSI (oed.epp10@noaa.gov) no later than 1 week before the EPP/MSI NERTO intern starts the graduate internship at NOAA.

10. The hosting NOAA mentor, through the hosting office/lab administrative structure, has the responsibility for onboarding the EPP/MSI NERTO Intern. This includes: access to the NOAA facility (badging); network access; and, functional workspace.

As a reminder, the EP/MSI NERTO requirement is 12 contiguous weeks (40 hours a week) at a NOAA facility. The EPP/MSI NERTO resources are available at [www.noaa.gov/eppnerto/](http://www.noaa.gov/eppnerto/). This process ensures that full and transparent communication is available to all parties for the EPP/MSI NERTO. All queries are addressed by NOAA EPP/MSI (oed.epp10@noaa.gov or 301-628-2902).
COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC & Virtual Internship

If the internship takes place during the period of social distancing, then the onboarding of an EPP/MSI NERTO graduate intern is conducted virtually. For the virtual EPP/MSI NERTO graduate internship, the hosting NOAA office is responsible for providing access, including network, NOAA email account, and as needed, limited security clearance.

**Duration:** The virtual internship is to be completed in 12 contiguous weeks (40 hours per week).

**NOAA Mentor Contact Hours:** During an EPP/MSI NERTO virtual graduate internship, a *minimum of 240 contact hours with a NOAA mentor* is anticipated. The expectations, format and frequency, to achieve the 240 contact hours with a NOAA mentor, are agreed on before the CSC graduate student begins the EPP/MSI NERTO internship.

**Security clearance for EPP/MSI NERTO Interns:** The hosting NOAA mentor and their NOAA Office will make the determination about whether the (a) background security clearance and (b) access to the NOAA network are needed during the Virtual EPP/MSI NERTO graduate internship. Depending on whether access is to be granted to internal information (not accessible to the general public) located on NOAA IT system(s) - the NOAA Office hosting the
EPP/MSI NERTO intern will determine if government furnished equipment (GFE) will be loaned to the EPP/MSI intern to access data and/or if a NOAA email is needed. The EPP/MSI NERTO intern’s Cooperative Science Center award recipient has the responsibility to ensure return to NOAA of the GFE item(s) issued to the EPP/MSI NERTO intern.

The hosting NOAA mentor/office is responsible for securing a NOAA email account for the EPP/MSI NERTO intern, if applicable.

**COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC ENVIRONMENT**

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Starting in 2021, the NOAA Mentor/hosting office makes the determination if the EPP/MSI NERTO graduate internship will be virtual or at the NOAA facility based on the NOAA site’s COVID-19 pandemic protocol.

**EPP/MSI NERTO Graduate Internship Requirement & Vaccination**

NOAA EPP/MSI Cooperative Science Center interns are required to adhere to the COVID-19 vaccination policies of the Federal government. NOAA, a bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), will continue to provide updates as guidance evolves. NOAA employees are encouraged to visit NOAA’s COVID-19 Health and Wellness Information for Employees site (https://sites.google.com/a/noaa.gov/covid/home) for the most up-to-date information.

If there are further questions, please contact the EPP/MSI team using oed.epp10@noaa.gov.