

2017 Summer Law Clerk Job Description

The Public Law Center, Orange County's *pro bono* law firm, is committed to providing access to justice for low income residents. Through volunteers and staff, the Public Law Center provides free civil legal services, including counseling, individual representation, community education, and strategic litigation and advocacy to challenge societal injustices.

We will accept between eight and ten full-time law clerks for our summer internship program.

General Job Duties: Summer law clerks will gain skills in at least some of the areas below:

- ***Client Interaction:*** Perform new case intake interviews; contact clients for follow-up through interviews and telephone calls; perform fact gathering; present new cases at weekly Case Acceptance meetings.
- ***Legal research & writing:*** Prepare opening case memos; draft correspondence, pleadings, and motions.
- ***Pro Bono Support:*** Assist in drafting manuals, samples, and educational presentations to support pro bono attorneys working on PLC cases. Prepare cases for placement.
- ***Community Education and Outreach:*** Research legal issues; prepare client education materials; assist in conducting presentations to clients.

Specific Project Duties:

In addition to the general duties described above, each law student will be assigned to one or two specific projects:

Community Development

Assist community-based nonprofit organizations (including incorporation, by-laws review, contracts review, employment issues, copyright) and micro-business start-ups (including employment issues, contracts review).

Consumer Law

Assist with consumer law matters, including debt collection (harassment and defense), bankruptcy, predatory lending, student loans, fraudulent or dishonest car sales, various types of frauds and scams, and identity theft. Attend and assist with two bankruptcy-related clinics and one federal *pro se* clinic where litigants are provided brief counsel and advice and assisted with completing court forms.

Family Law

Assist with family law cases including guardianship, dissolution, and domestic violence. Staff legal clinics where we assist a significant number of people, including courthouse based domestic violence, dissolution and guardianship clinics. SPANISH SPEAKER PREFERRED.

Housing & Homelessness

Assist with housing related issues, including evictions, landlord-tenant disputes, impact litigation, public housing, Section 8 termination and benefits for homeless individuals and families. Assist with litigation by drafting pleadings, interviewing clients and witnesses, and preparing cases with handling attorney for trial. SPANISH SPEAKER PREFERRED.

Immigration

Assist victims of human trafficking, asylum seekers, victims of domestic and other forms of violence, unaccompanied minors, and other individuals who need assistance completing and following up on pending applications. Staff Naturalization Clinics to assist individuals in the preparation of applications. Attend community and collaborative meetings on human trafficking. SPANISH SPEAKER REQUIRED.

AIDS Legal Assistance Project and Medical Legal Partnerships (MLP): Health and Probate Law

Assist low-income clients, interviewing in person or by phone regarding general civil matters including current issues under the Affordable Care Act, estate planning, conservatorship, discrimination, wrongful disclosure of private facts and benefits issues. Attend health-related legal clinics which are held in medical centers to address the legal needs of low-income individuals so that they can focus on their health and getting well. Spanish-speaking is a plus.

Veteran's Project

Assist low-income veterans by providing legal services on a variety of issues including bankruptcy, housing matters and eviction defense, government benefits applications and appeals, discharge upgrades, and criminal record expungements. Attend and assist with legal clinics.

Qualifications:

- First, second, or third year (part-time) law student;
- Demonstrated commitment to serving low-income or disadvantaged individuals, families, and communities;
- Excellent research and writing skills;
- Ability to work efficiently and independently with moderate level of supervision;
- Sensitivity and ability to work with victims of domestic violence and other sensitive populations; a
- Fluency in Spanish or Vietnamese preferred for most positions, but not required unless indicated above.

Time Commitment: Full-time

Compensation: This is an unpaid position. However, we will work with selected applicants to apply for a PILF grant, work-study, or other summer funding. Alternatively, applicants can seek academic credit through their school's externship program.

How to apply: Please send a cover letter – detailing relevant experience, why you are interested in volunteering for PLC, and specific projects you prefer to work on – as a separate email attachment, along with resume and writing sample (10 pages or less) to lawstudents@publiclawcenter.org. Submissions by email only.

Deadline: Applications reviewed on an ongoing basis.