

2021 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 at least one summer extern per project.

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 non-profits, small businesses and child care providers in Orange County. Projects vary, and may include the following: non-profit and small business formation; taxation and compliance; review of a non-profit's website; intellectual property matters such as copyright and trademark requests for non-profit organizations or small businesses; or employment issues.

Consumer Law

Assist with consumer matters, including debt collection (harassment and defense), bankruptcy, predatory lending, student loans, homeownership disputes, various types of frauds and scams, and identity theft. Assist with courthouse-based clinics where individuals are provided brief counsel and advice. Will include some work focused on older adults.

Family Law

Assist with family law cases including child custody, child visitation, child support, guardianship, dissolution, and domestic violence. Staff courthouse-based clinics to assist self-represented litigants.
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.

Mobile Home Advocacy

Assist mobilehome owners, who are also tenants in the parks where their mobilehome is located, with solving legal issues arising out of their homeownership and/or tenancy. Work includes legal research and investigation, demand letters, counsel and advice and litigation.

Immigration

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

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

Assist indigent persons encountered in medical settings with general civil matters, particularly including current issues under the Affordable Care Act, estate planning, discrimination on the basis of disability, and benefits issues. Attend Family Resource Center Clinics, which are typically 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 SPEAKER PREFERRED.

Veterans 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, and discharge upgrades. 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;
- Fluency in Spanish or Vietnamese preferred for most positions

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 may be able to 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, along with resume and writing sample (10 pages or less) to lawstudent@publiclawcenter.org. Submissions by email only.

Deadline: Applications reviewed on an ongoing basis.