



**HEATHER FERBERT**  
**CITY ATTORNEY**  
**CITY OF SAN DIEGO**

## **CRIMINAL AND COMMUNITY JUSTICE DIVISION** **LEGAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

### **FACT AND INFORMATION SHEET**

The City Attorney's Criminal and Community Justice Division prosecutes criminal misdemeanors and infractions committed within the City of San Diego, with a focus on protecting public safety and quality of life. The Division includes the Case Issuance Unit, General Trial Unit, Special Prosecutions Unit, Domestic Violence and Sex Crimes Unit, Appellate Unit, Neighborhood Justice and Collaborative Courts Unit (NJU), and the Prosecution Operations Unit.

The Office of the City Attorney, Criminal and Community Justice Division, offers volunteer internships for current law school students and recent law school graduates (post bar). Volunteers do not receive compensation or benefits. There are three internship sessions each calendar year: spring, summer, and fall post bar.

Volunteer interns will gain valuable experience in legal research, writing, pretrial motion advocacy, and trial preparation under the direct supervision of a deputy city attorney. This opportunity includes conferring with witnesses and victims, first-chairing motions and evidentiary hearings, as well as second-chairing jury trials.

Interns will receive mentorship from experienced prosecutors, exposure to criminal cases, and comprehensive training for a career in prosecution. They will also learn about rehabilitative and restorative justice programs that assist the homeless and those struggling with addiction. Interns are assigned an attorney for mentoring and professional support, along with an intern coordinator to offer further guidance throughout their experience.

These unpaid volunteer positions provide unique opportunities for hands-on legal experience while working alongside practicing attorneys. The Criminal and Community Justice Division offers internships for academic credit or as volunteer positions. Typical duties include conducting legal research, drafting legal documents, conferring with victims about restitution, reviewing body-worn camera footage while taking detailed notes to assist with trial preparation, managing discovery, arguing briefs and motions, and possibly conducting portions of misdemeanor jury trials.

Certified legal interns may have the opportunity to make court appearances during their internship which can include second-chairing jury trials, arguing motions, and conducting evidentiary hearings. All work is performed under the direct supervision of a deputy city attorney. Students must be certified by the California State Bar as a certified legal intern through the Practical Training of Law Students (PTLS) program. Information about this program can be found here: [Practical Training of Law Students](#).

Qualified candidates should have strong legal research, writing, and oral advocacy skills. Passion for criminal law, public service and justice, and the ability to work under pressure in a fast-paced environment is highly desired.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Students should apply through their law school’s career services department and participate in on-campus interviews. Students from law schools that do not offer on-campus interviews may submit their application to [cityattyinternprog@sandiego.gov](mailto:cityattyinternprog@sandiego.gov). Please submit a letter of interest, a current resume, a copy of a recent law school transcript (unofficial copy is acceptable), and a brief writing sample (maximum of 10 pages). In the letter of interest, please indicate the program session for which you are applying: spring, summer, or fall. For students interested in post-bar positions, please review the additional post-bar recruitment information.

Spring interns volunteer a minimum of 20 hours a week (excluding lunch breaks) for at least 10 weeks. For the summer session, interns volunteer approximately 35-40 hours per week for 10-12 weeks. This is an in-person internship with regular office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For the post-bar spring and fall sessions, interns should anticipate volunteering approximately 35-40 hours per week for at least 12 weeks. This is an in-person internship with regular office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The post-bar positions start in August or March (approximately two weeks after taking the California Bar Exam). Post-bar candidates invited to interview will receive a mock fact pattern and written instructions for the oral presentation of the interview. Post-bars are encouraged to apply for a deputy city attorney position during open recruitment (which usually begins in April and September).

Internships must be completed during the specified session dates. Interns are required to attend an in-person orientation on the first day of their internship.

Session	Session Dates	Mandatory Orientation	Application Deadline / *Window
Spring Post-Bar 2026	March 9, 2026 - May 1, 2026	March 9, 2026 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	*September 1, 2025, to December 5, 2025 5:00 p.m.
Summer 2026	May 18, 2026 - July 31, 2026	May 18, 2026 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	February 13, 2026 5:00 p.m.
Fall Post Bar 2026	August 17, 2026 - November 6, 2026	August 17, 2026 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	*November 3, 2025, to March 13, 2026 5:00 p.m.
Spring 2027	January 11, 2027 - March 26, 2027	January 11, 2027 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	*July 3, 2026, to September 28, 2026 5:00 p.m.

Scan the QR code to learn more.

