



Office of San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott

OFFICE OF THE SAN DIEGO CITY ATTORNEY CRIMINAL DIVISION INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FACT AND INFORMATION SHEET

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

The Criminal Division of the San Diego City Attorney's Office prosecutes criminal misdemeanors and infractions committed within City limits. The Community Justice Division prosecutes cases that the community has identified as important to quality of life. The Division also manages the Community Justice Initiative and collaborative courts program. Deputies in the Divisions prepare and prosecute misdemeanor criminal cases in the City of San Diego by handling a variety of motions, misdemeanor jury trials, and conducting legal research. Law students will be assigned to a specific Unit and work exclusively with that Unit. Legal interns may have an opportunity to second chair jury trials, argue motions, and conduct evidentiary hearings. All work is completed under the direct supervision of a deputy city attorney.

The internship program offers an excellent opportunity for students to enhance their education by gaining "hands-on" experience. Interns gain valuable practical experience while completing meaningful and interesting work such as arguing motions or conducting hearings under the supervision of a deputy city attorney as well as learning about our innovative rehabilitative and restorative justice programs that help the homeless and those addicted to drugs, alcohol, and other substances.

The Criminal Division offers internships to students as volunteers or for academic credit. Typical duties of an intern include: conduct legal research, draft accurate legal documents such as pleadings, legal responses, memoranda, and briefs, confer with witnesses and victims of crime, prepare and subpoena witnesses, draft discovery responses and comply with discovery obligations, argue a variety of briefs and motions, and conduct misdemeanor jury trials, either a portion of or the entire trial.

Qualified candidates should have excellent legal research, writing, and oral advocacy skills. Candidates should be detail-oriented, able to prioritize assignments and independently manage a workload, demonstrate good judgment and initiative, and interact effectively with different personalities and work styles.

Certified legal interns may have opportunities to make court appearances during the internship. 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](#).

APPLICATION PROCESS

Students should apply through the career services department of their law school and participate in on-campus interviews. Other students attending a law school that does not participate in on-campus interviews may submit their application to cityattyinternprog@sandiego.gov. Please provide a letter of interest, a current résumé, a copy of a recent law school transcript (unofficial copy is acceptable), and a brief writing sample (maximum of 10 pages). In the cover letter, please indicate the requested program session: spring, summer, or fall.

Spring interns are required to volunteer a minimum of 20 hours a week (excluding lunch breaks) for at least 10-12 weeks. For the summer session, interns are required to volunteer approximately 35-40 hours per week. Regular office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The internship will be in person.

For the post-bar spring and fall session, interns are required to volunteer approximately 35-40 hours per week. 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 session dates specified below. Upon request, an alternate start date may be approved. Interns must attend a mandatory orientation session.

SESSION	SESSION DATES	MANDATORY ORIENTATION	APPLICATION DEADLINE
SPRING 2025	January 13, 2025 – March 28, 2025	January 13, 2025 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	October 4, 2024 5:00 p.m.
SPRING POST-BAR 2025	March 10, 2025 – May 2, 2025	March 10, 2025 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	December 6, 2024 5:00 p.m.
SUMMER 2025	May 19, 2025 – August 1, 2025	May 19, 2025 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	February 7, 2025 5:00 p.m.
FALL 2025	August 11, 2025 – November 7, 2025	August 11, 2025 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	The applications will be received and reviewed on a rolling basis.
SPRING 2026	January 12, 2026 – March 27, 2026	January 12, 2026 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	October 3, 2025 5:00 p.m.

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