

Phoenix Law Department

Prosecutor's Office Externship Program

1.0 Overview of Program

The City of Phoenix's Law Department, Prosecutor's Office, offers four unpaid educational externship positions for law students each semester (spring, summer, and fall): three positions in the Trial Bureau; and one position in the Appeals Bureau. The externs in the Trial Bureau are selected by Arizona State University's Law School from among the students who register for the externship class. A Team Captain in the Trial Bureau serves as a supervisor and mentor ("**Attorney Lead**" or "**Lead**") for the externs. The Appeals Bureau extern is selected by another Attorney Lead, who is an Appeals Bureau Team Captain. This position is posted through Arizona State University's Law School Career Services who forwards cover letters and resumes from interested students. Leads interview selected candidates and obtain writing samples and transcripts from the students before selecting an extern.

These positions provide a practical component to classroom instruction by providing externs with experience in a legal setting. Through externships, students are afforded the opportunity to improve relevant legal skills/competencies (such as research, writing, analysis, and trial skills) and to increase their knowledge of criminal law and procedure.

In the Appeals Bureau, Attorney Lead will provide opportunities for extern performance and evaluation (with routine/frequent feedback) and will educate externs about professionalism, substantive law, and ethics. In the Trial Bureau, externs will be second-chaired in trials by seasoned attorneys who will provide oral and written feedback on the externs' performance. Being supervised by different attorneys, the trial externs receive feedback from diverse perspectives.

Students may seek educational credit through their law school for the externships (generally 1 credit hour for every 55 hours worked). In those cases, externs must complete (and document) the requisite number of hours worked, and Attorney Leads must complete and submit their mid-term and final evaluations. Trial externs must complete 260 hours to receive credit for their externships.

2.0 Preparation for Extern

Attorney Leads in the Appeals and Trial Bureaus must prepare for the externs' arrival, coordinating each extern's background check, badging, office space, and computer access with staff. Leads will contact the extern to confirm the start and ending dates and work schedule. Other attorneys may be enlisted by Leads to find interesting extern assignments. Lead should also plan observation opportunities for externs to observe different court settings.

3.0 Arrival of Extern

On the first day, Attorney Leads will meet with their externs, introduce them to other employees, and show them their designated workspaces. Leads will explain the Law

Department's purpose and structure; discuss expectations and communication channels for that extern(s) (and exchange contact information); and address other protocols, such as dress code, punctuality, security, safety, and computer/phone use. In coordination with the department liaison and courthouse security, Leads will assist in picking up an extern badge for courthouse access and instruct the extern of how to obtain a parking pass, if needed.

In the Appeals Bureau, Attorney Lead will also communicate with the externs about goals/assignments and help balance the workload. Lead should make assignments clear by providing sufficient background, suggesting reference materials, specifying the desired form for the finished product, and setting realistic deadlines. In the Trial Bureau, Lead will ensure that all Rule 39 paperwork is complete and provide the training necessary for the externs to perform trials. Leads will ensure that the externs receive the proper ACJIS training.

Externs will be expected to sign an externship placement agreement, which covers topics such as: the nature/term of externship, participation without pay/benefits, release of liability, and confidentiality/data security. Attorney Lead will seek a countersignature by the City Attorney and provide the extern with an executed copy.

4.0 Development of Extern

The externs should be assigned legal work that develops a variety of legal skills and experiences, such as handling bench trials, legal research and writing, fact development/analysis, and hearing preparation. The Trial Bureau externs should be afforded as much in-court time as possible, handling a variety of cases in different courtrooms with different second chairs, so as to be exposed to distinct legal and factual issues and styles. The externship should develop the concepts underlying the professional skills taught, providing opportunities for performance and self-evaluation.

All attorneys who work with the externs should encourage growth in extern competencies, building on their existing knowledge of substantive/procedural law and their ability to perform legal analysis, conduct legal research, solve problems, communicate effectively, handle trial issues, and understand professional/ethical responsibilities. Attorney Leads should provide accurate, specific, and timely feedback to their externs frequently and routinely, meeting with their externs at least once per week.

For the Appeals Bureau extern, Attorney Lead must complete a mid-term and final evaluation, discussing both with the extern prior to their submission.

5.0 Continued Mentorship

Under the City's Small Business Entrepreneurial Protégé Program, the Equal Opportunity Department has established objectives for guidance of mentees (such as externs) into the business world, helping them to set and achieve professional goals through advice and encouragement. During and beyond the externship, Attorney Leads should serve as mentors to

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their externs, supporting their learning and development as they move through law school into legal careers. These students may need mentor advice regarding legal coursework/writing, class selection, bar examination preparation, fields of work/law, and job/internship applications (cover letters/résumés). Regular follow-up with former externs by their Leads is suggested.