

PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICE
for the District of Columbia

**CRIMINAL LAW
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

THE
PUBLIC
DEFENDER
SERVICE

for the District of Columbia



CHAMPIONS OF LIBERTY

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

2009-2010

To Prospective Interns:

Thank you for your interest in the Criminal Law Internship Program at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia. The following pages will provide you with an overview of the Internship Program and directions for applying.

The Criminal Law Internship Program is one of the preeminent legal internship opportunities in the United States. It has been described by *The Washington Post* as one of the finest pre-law experiences available, and *The Princeton Review* has consistently ranked the program as one of the most hands-on internship programs in the nation, stating that the program is "a criminal law internship at its in-your-face best."

We can offer you a unique learning experience that can both prepare you for graduate-level work and provide you with the experience necessary for employment in any field. Former participants of the program, produced in its 30-year history, are now some of the most prestigious members of the legal community.

I hope that you will find the attached materials informative, but please do not hesitate to contact the Internship Office if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to receiving your application.

Patricia Slater
Supervisory Investigator
Criminal Law Internship Program
Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia

General Description and Intern Duties

The mission of the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS) is to provide and promote quality legal representation to indigent adults and children facing a loss of liberty in the District of Columbia and thereby protect society's interest in the fair administration of justice. The **Criminal Law Internship Program (CLIP)** is designed to provide undergraduate, graduate, and law students with the fundamental investigative techniques and relevant criminal law knowledge needed to assist attorneys within the organization. At the end of an intensive weeklong training session, the Intern Investigators are assigned to either one or two attorneys in the Trial Division for whom they are to complete all investigative aspects of the assigned cases. A small number of Intern Investigators may also be placed in our Civil Division, Parole Division, or other litigation divisions as needed. The responsibilities of an Intern Investigator include locating and interviewing witnesses and clients, taking detailed witness statements, performing extensive criminal background checks, serving subpoenas, photographing and diagramming crime scenes, preparing courtroom exhibits, writing reports regarding investigative activities, assisting with case development, and generally assisting the assigned attorney(s) in and out of the courtroom.

The attorneys in our Trial Division represent adults on felony cases, as well as juveniles on equally serious cases. For all cases, a thorough pre-trial investigation of the facts is a prerequisite to providing our clients with the highest quality representation. Although PDS employs a staff of professional investigators, a significant portion of our investigative work is accomplished by the Intern Investigators. Attorneys work closely with their Intern Investigators on a daily basis, in a sense continuing the training process that began during the first week of the program. As the program progresses, additional meetings and training sessions are scheduled to discuss topics that are relevant to the role of the Intern Investigators.

Although Interns Investigators will be given some clerical duties, the vast majority of their work will be carried out in the community. To understand the work of the Intern Investigator, it is helpful to realize that each court system across the country has rules specifying what information the prosecution must provide to the defense and when they must provide it. In the District of Columbia, the prosecution need not (and generally does not) give the defense the names and addresses of witnesses or the substance of their statements. Thus, in each case, the defense must discover who the witnesses are and interview them to find out what they know about the incident. No one has an obligation to speak with us, so Intern Investigators must rely upon a combination of charm, honesty, and persuasion to obtain interviews. Because these interviews are in preparation for trial, Intern Investigators write detailed reports and statements in a format that is appropriate for use in court.

Obviously, this is not a desk job. Nor is it a simple opportunity to observe an attorney at work. Each Intern Investigator is an important member of a defense team, headed by the Staff Attorney to whom he or she is assigned. Intern Investigators are provided direction and supervision by both the Supervisory Investigator in charge of the Internship Program and the Staff Attorney, however, this is a very independent internship as most of the intern's time is spent away from the office in the field. Through their investigative efforts, Intern Investigators assist the attorneys in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the charges brought against our clients. They enable our clients to make informed decisions about plea offers. Moreover, in the case of trial, the information and witnesses the Intern Investigators uncover provide the building blocks necessary to support the defense theory.

CLIP Program Requirements

The varied responsibilities of the Intern Investigators require a willingness to work irregular hours at times. The first week of rigorous training takes place during normal business hours. However, once an Intern Investigator is assigned to a Staff Attorney, his/her hours may, on occasion, extend past nine to five, Monday through Friday. The work hours will be dictated by when witnesses are likely to be at home, the operating hours of the various agencies and companies from which records must be obtained, and scheduled court hearings. Each Intern Investigator is responsible for the completion of his or her assigned tasks and for planning with his or her attorney how and when those tasks are to be accomplished.

A full-time commitment of 40 hours per week is preferable since it is difficult for an Intern Investigator to function effectively for our clients during a shorter period. However, Intern Investigators may hold outside part-time jobs while working for PDS. The irregular hours and the independence of investigative work are usually compatible with a part-time job. Individuals who can give less than 40 hours a week to CLIP may apply if they can commit a minimum of 24 hours a week (3 full days). Please note that all Intern Investigators are required to commit a full week to the training session at the beginning of their internship regardless of whether they will regularly work less than 40 hour a week. In some limited instances, makeup training sessions are allowed. Please keep in mind that makeup training sessions may not be as beneficial as the full session and therefore the Intern Investigators should attempt to arrange their schedule around the full week training sessions.

During the fall and spring semester terms, Intern Investigators often are taking classes or involved in organized programs that require attendance at seminars. Consequently, more part-time students are considered and accepted during the fall and spring terms. During the summer term, applicants with significant time limitations are generally not accepted.

Intern Investigators are required to commit a minimum of 12 weeks to CLIP, including the first week of training. Some exceptions to the 12-week requirement can be issued during the fall and spring terms or for students involved in programs that have a pre-determined length. Please consult the Supervisory Investigator in charge of CLIP to request an exemption from the 12 week commitment. Intern Investigators may take some days off over the course of the program. However, plans should not be made that will create severe conflicts with your internship dates. Exiting the program before the established date is generally not allowed, however, once involved in the program many Intern Investigators choose to extend the length of their internship.

Applicants to the program must be attending an accredited four-year college, graduate school or law school, or be a recent college graduate. All levels of undergraduate students are considered, however juniors and seniors are preferred. All majors are considered, and some background or understanding of the legal system is helpful but not required.

Participation in the Criminal Law Internship Program does not require that you have investigative or legal experience and there is no prerequisite coursework. However, this is not an internship for everyone. We depend upon our potential candidates to seriously consider whether this internship is right for them. If selected to participate, you will work directly with trial attorneys who constantly face tight deadlines and long hours. Some people find criminal law too emotional and others are not open to learning about the defense role in our adversarial system of justice.

The program seeks applicants with strong written and oral communication skills. Intern Investigators will work with diverse communities throughout DC, so applicants must be able to speak effectively to individuals of varied backgrounds and cultures.

Non-US citizens are eligible to participate as volunteers. The Public Defender Service is strongly committed to the principle of diversity and actively encourages applications from people of varied and diverse backgrounds.

Location, Dress Code, and Work Environment

The PDS main office is located between Judiciary Square and the National Archives, which includes the DC Superior Courthouse, the US Federal Courthouse, the US Attorney's Office, and the Metropolitan Police Department. PDS is also just a short walk from the US Capitol, the US Supreme Court, the Senate and House Office buildings, and the Library of Congress, as well as the numerous museums on the National Mall.

Intern Investigators normally work in casual clothes; jeans and sneakers are the norm. They should be prepared to dress more formally if they are required to testify in court or interview individuals with whom business attire is appropriate.

PDS has an Intern Investigator computer lab where mail boxes, computer terminals, and telephones are available. Many attorneys, however, prefer that Intern Investigators work out of their (the attorneys') offices when they are not in the field.

The Intern Investigator's most important work is accomplished away from the office. The first (and often the second and third) step in the assessment of the defense case is to visit the scene of the arrest and/or alleged crime. Consequently, it is common for everyone who represents indigent clients (Staff Attorneys, Staff Investigators, and Intern Investigators) to spend a significant amount of time in the various neighborhoods of DC. This includes some of the more impoverished communities in the DC Metropolitan area. Intern Investigators should also expect to regularly visit the local jails, police stations, and courthouses to locate witnesses and records.

Finally, it should be noted that there are inherent risks in living and working in an urban area that are different from those of college campuses in smaller towns. While we emphasize safety techniques including how to approach and talk to people, dressing down, not carrying valuables, and driving so we can go where we want and leave when we want to, field work will never be a zero-risk proposition.

The office environment is casual and laid-back. The PDS family is open and welcoming, and we are passionate about and dedicated to the work that we do for our clients.

Transportation and Travel Expense Reimbursement

Because Intern Investigators need to go where witnesses, crime scenes, and documents can be found, full-time access to a vehicle is beneficial, although not required. All travel expenses and most parking expenses incurred while on the job are reimbursed by PDS. All personal vehicles used by PDS Intern Investigators in conducting official PDS business must be covered by liability insurance. PDS does have a number of Intern Investigator positions reserved for applicants who do not have access to a vehicle, however, these positions are limited and will vary depending on the number of qualified applicants with access to a vehicle. Intern Investigators without a vehicle may be reimbursed for on-

the-job Metro and bus fare.

Intern Investigators without a vehicle and those with a vehicle are required to complete the same training. When partner assignments are being considered, every effort will be made to pair Intern Investigators without a vehicle to those with a vehicle so there will be at least one vehicle between the two. If the unlikely situation arises in which such a pairing cannot be made, the responsibilities of Intern Investigator's without vehicles will, of necessity, involve more clerical work and less fieldwork. We encourage anyone interested in experiencing the full breadth of this program to attempt to obtain a car for the term.

Fellowships and Stipends

Information on our Fellowship and Stipend programs can be found below. Please note that we encourage students to seek out public interest fellowships or grants that may be available through their colleges, universities, or other public interest foundations. Fellowships and Stipends through PDS are based on the availability of funding. PDS reserves the right to choose not to award or extend Fellowships or Stipends based on the lack of available funds, or for any of the reasons described below.

Fellowships:

Based on the availability of funds, the Fellowship is reserved for those students who have already participated in CLIP for at least one semester and are returning for a subsequent semester, while providing investigative support between normal Internship sessions. The student must have displayed superior investigative skills and have at least one favorable performance evaluation, with no negative evaluations. The Supervisory Investigator, the Deputy Chief of Investigations, and the Chief of Investigations choose the Fellowship recipients. Students who receive school credit for their participation in CLIP or who receive funding from an outside source may not be eligible for the Fellowship. For recipients whose duties predominantly include field investigation, the Fellowship is paid at a rate of \$10.00 per hour for the first 16 weeks, \$12.00 per hour for the second 16 weeks, and \$15.00 per hour for the third 16 weeks. The pay increases are based on continued superior performance and are made at the discretion of the Supervisory Investigator. For recipients whose duties do not predominantly include field investigation, the Fellowship is paid at a rate of \$10.00 per hour, with no increase potential. All hourly pay rates are subject to availability of funds and continued superior performance. The number of hours per week to be worked by the recipient is agreed upon by the Supervisory Investigator and the recipient. The Fellowship expires after five terms (including unpaid and paid terms). The Supervisory Investigator reserves the right to increase a recipient's pay rate before the 16 week mark or extend Fellowships past the initial expiration date based on good performance and supervising attorney support. The Supervisory Investigator also reserves the right to rescind the Fellowship based on poor attendance, poor work productivity, or any other reason deemed appropriate for such an action.

Stipends:

Based on the availability of funds, the Supervisory Investigator may open a separate Stipend application process for students who have already been accepted to participate in CLIP on a volunteer basis. All Stipend recipients must have already been selected to participate in the program as a volunteer. Once the Stipend application process is open, first time participants (or returnees who are not receiving the Fellowship) may apply for the Stipend by completing the Stipend application form and submitting it to the Supervisory Investigator by the listed deadline. The Supervisory Investigator, the Deputy Chief of Investigations, and the Chief of Investigations choose the Stipend recipients. Students who are receiving school credit for their participation in CLIP or who are receiving funding from an outside source may not be eligible for the Stipend. The Stipend is paid at a rate of \$8.00 per hour (may be subject to change) for the number of weeks agreed upon by the Supervisory Investigator and the recipient. The Supervisory Investigator in charge of CLIP reserves the right to rescind the Stipend based on poor attendance, poor work productivity, or any other reason deemed appropriate for such an action.

Perks**Training:**

As Intern Investigators are not required to have any previous experience, the training sessions are extremely important. The first week of the internship is a mandatory intensive training program during which interns learn basic investigative techniques such as interviewing witnesses and taking detailed witness statements. Intern Investigators are also given an overview of the criminal justice system with an emphasis on the laws governing and shaping the conduct of a criminal defense investigator in the District of Columbia. Ongoing training opportunities will be provided to reinforce the skills that the Intern Investigators acquire in their first week.

Tours and Lectures:

Each term, CLIP offers a tour and lecture series designed to expose Intern Investigators to many facets of the criminal justice system. In the past, Intern Investigators have met informally with prosecutors from the US Attorney's Office, vice squad officers, homicide detectives, and DC Superior Court judges. Scheduled tours have included St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital, the autopsy room at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the Mobile Crime Unit operated by the Metropolitan Police Department, and the cellblock and lockdown wards at the DC Jail and the Correctional Treatment Facility.

Court Watching:

Through their day-to-day work with their assigned attorneys, Intern Investigators are likely to observe plea negotiations and discovery conferences with prosecutors, client interviews, and a variety of pre- and post-trial court hearings. In addition, there is always a trial in DC Superior Court in which PDS is involved. Intern Investigators are encouraged to "court watch" during their free time.

LSAT Discount:

Intern Investigators sometimes find it convenient to take preparatory courses for law or graduate school during their internship. Stanley Kaplan and Princeton Review offer PDS Intern Investigators a 15% discount for LSAT, GMAT, GRE, and MCAT preparatory courses offered in the DC area.

Odds and Ends

Obtaining School Credit:

Many undergraduate and graduate/law school programs will award academic credit to participants in the Criminal Law Internship Program. The requirements and procedures may vary depending upon the specific school. If credit is approved, the Supervisory Investigator in charge of the Internship Program will submit whatever paperwork or materials are required for credit, but the Intern Investigator is responsible for ascertaining what materials are necessary. The number of credits you can receive varies greatly depending upon the school and major. Some schools will award a full semester's worth of credit, while others will only award the equivalent of one class.

Work Study Funding:

Students eligible for work-study funding at their home schools may be able to extend their contracts to PDS for a term. Applicants interested in this option should contact their home school's work-study office and the Supervisory Investigator in charge of CLIP at PDS at least six weeks in advance of their starting date. They should also inquire in their work-study office about any special matching fund rates for public interest organizations. The lower the matching fund rate for PDS, the more likely we are to be able to meet it. Again, PDS funding is subject to availability.

Housing:

Although we cannot set up your housing, we can offer direction in obtaining affordable housing during your internship. A housing bulletin is available to Intern Investigators who have been selected to participate in the program. This bulletin will provide a list of housing options, a description of the neighborhoods within DC, services that are available to those looking for housing, etc. We can also provide you with information on other Intern Investigators that are looking for housing if you are interested in rooming with another PDS intern.

Insurance:

Participants in CLIP are responsible for having their own health insurance coverage. As the Intern Investigators are not employees of PDS, they are not covered under our health plan. Coverage through a private insurance carrier, college or university, military, or other provider is sufficient. Those Intern Investigators with vehicles should also have their own automobile insurance. Proof of that insurance is necessary at the commencement of the program. PDS cannot provide insurance coverage for vehicles or drivers in the program. The amount of coverage will not be reviewed by PDS, however, the individual should assess the terms and limitations of the insurance.

Who Should Apply?

Dynamic interns who thrive on the challenges of interacting with a variety of people, speaking persuasively to strangers, working independently, and thinking on their feet are crucial to our success.

Anyone who thrives on the challenges of fast paced on-the-job learning and interacting with a variety of people in a range of settings, as well as anyone who wants to learn about the law and our legal system by actually working in it, not simply by observing others, will undoubtedly enjoy the Criminal Law Internship Program. By the end of their PDS term, Intern Investigators have an opinion about our adversarial system of justice that is well grounded in fact and experience. Those who are

interested in law school have a source of recommendations and know whether they are interested in trial work or would be more comfortable in another area of practice. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, PDS Intern Investigators have the satisfaction of knowing that they performed a much-needed public service for individuals who generally have little access to the legal system. If you believe that the quality of legal representation should not depend on the income of the accused and wish to assist our attorneys in providing the highest quality representation to our clients, you have a place at PDS.

Recently, CLIP conducted a comprehensive survey of former Intern Investigators. Former participants exalted the personal and professional benefits of participation. The Internship Program was a frequent topic of conversation in interviews, for both jobs and admission into law or graduate school. Former Intern Investigators found that they were more competitive candidates for both based upon their experience. Recommendations and job search assistance from our staff members can give you a strong edge when you graduate.

The Criminal Law Internship Program has gained national recognition, including favorable reviews by *The Washington Post* and interest expressed by a national network news broadcast. *The Princeton Review* consistently rates CLIP as one of the top internship programs in the nation. In their concluding remarks, they described the program as follows:

When shuffling papers at the local law firm just won't do it for you, its time to seriously consider the Public Defender Service for D.C. The PDS internship is a remarkably hands-on experience, where, in the words of a former intern, "you're out there scrapping, interviewing witnesses, photographing crime scenes, working with attorneys - doing real work for real cases." Add one-of-a-kind field trips, extensive investigative training, and the rush of having the nation's capitol as your training ground, and you've got a criminal law internship at its in your face best.

We agree. The legal community is filled with alumni from the Criminal Law Internship Program—judges, lawyers, law enforcement agents, and social service leaders can point to the experience as their professional springboard. We hope that you will choose to join us.

Selection Process and Application Information

The application process for the Criminal Law Internship Program is highly competitive, particularly for the summer session. Applications are accepted on a *rolling basis*, however, deadlines have been implemented and are listed below. Because applications are considered as they are received, it is highly recommended that serious candidates for any session submit their applications as soon as possible. Applications must be received by the listed deadline to be guaranteed for consideration for any session. Applications received after the listed deadlines are not guaranteed responses. Much consideration is given to the quality of thought and creativity in the essay portion of the application. Recommendation letters are not required, but they can be helpful. Letters should be submitted with the application.

Once the applications are received and reviewed, interviews will be conducted for those who are being considered. Telephone interviews are available if necessary. Due to the high volume of applications, not all individuals should expect an interview and therefore should submit any supporting material within their application packet.

As most of the Intern Investigators participating in the Criminal Law Internship Program are students, the internship dates coincide with academic quarter and semester schedules. Remember that applicants must be able to commit a minimum of 12 weeks to the program, with limited exceptions. Any participant proposing durations shorter than 12 weeks must obtain prior approval from the Supervisory Investigator in charge of the Criminal Law Internship Program. Start dates and deadlines can be also found on the front page of the application.

Application Deadlines for Fall 2009 Through Summer 2010:

Fall 2009:	August 3 rd , 2009
Winter Quarter/Spring Semester 2010:	December 11 th , 2009
Spring Quarter 2010:	February 12 th , 2010
Summer 2010:	March 12 th , 2010

Internship Start Dates for Fall 2009 Through Summer 2010:

Fall 2009:	Training sessions begin August 31 st , September 14 th , or September 28th.
Winter Quarter/Spring Semester 2010:	Training sessions begin January 4 th , January 18 th , or February 8th.
Spring Quarter 2010:	Training sessions begin March 15th or March 29th.
Summer 2010:	Training sessions begin May 10th, May 24th, June 7th, or June 21st.

If you are interested in applying for a later term, please contact the Supervisory Investigator for possible training dates.

Send the completed application form, resume, cover letter, and supplemental material to:

Criminal Law Internship Program
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(202) 628-1200 or (800) 341-2582
E-Mail: Internship@pdsdc.org
Web Site: www.pdsdc.org
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