

The Philadelphia Law Department is pleased to offer Spring 2021 semester legal externships for 2L and 3L students for 4 credits. In this externship, students will gain first-hand experience working on litigation matters, transactional matters or policy matters for the City of Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Law Department handles the City's litigation, offers advice and counsel to the Mayor, the City Council, and City agencies, and represents the City in development deals. The Law Department is composed of four groups: Corporate and Tax, Litigation, Social Services, and Legislation. Within each group are Units and Divisions with a wide range of practice areas. Our attorneys represent the City before federal and state courts on a diverse array of matters, including civil rights, tort claims, labor and employment, affirmative litigation, and appeals.

In the past, students have drafted legislation, participated in development deals, drafted memoranda of law and litigation documents, including complaints and answers, joined City attorneys in meetings with government officials, and assisted at legislative hearings, depositions or trials. Each student will be assigned to work at a division at the Philadelphia Law Department for 12 hours/week, working on issues such as: lawsuits challenging the validity of the City's regulatory laws; litigation in which the City is a plaintiff; economic development projects; discrimination, retaliation, or other employment-related claims; legislation and counseling; or dependency matters.

Fieldwork

Each student will be assigned to one unit for the duration of the course. The Law Department will assign students to a specific unit based on the Department's needs and resources at the start of the externship and cannot guarantee that a student will be assigned to any particular unit at the time an offer is made. Potential unit assignments include:

- **Legislation & Legal Counsel Unit-** Attorneys enjoy researching and wrestling with legal and policy issues. The unit works with the Mayor's Office, City Council, and all agencies of the City in drafting, reviewing, and formulating legislation. *Please note that a writing sample is required for students interested in externing with this unit.*
- **Civil Rights Unit-** The Civil Rights Unit (CRU) defends all lawsuits filed against the City and its employees in which it is alleged that an individual's constitutionally-protected rights have been violated. Most of these cases are filed in federal court under the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C 1983.
- **Code & Public Nuisance Litigation Unit-** Attorneys in the Code Enforcement Unit file lawsuits against property owners and businesses who maintain dangerous, hazardous, and unsafe businesses and properties which threaten the public health and safety and decrease property values in the community. *3Ls are preferred in the fall.*
- **Affirmative and Special Litigation Unit-** Represent the City in affirmative public policy litigation. They represent the City (and its officers when sued in their official capacity) in civil actions involving claims arising out of or relating to contracts for procurement of goods and services, contracts for performance of construction and similar public works, other City commercial transactions, and eminent domain.
- **Appeals Unit-** Handles appellate matters in both state and federal courts including civil rights cases, labor and employment matters, tort claims, and contractual disputes. In addition, the unit handles administrative agency appeals concerning tax, pension, Civil Service Commission decisions, and land use matters.
- **Labor & Employment Unit-** Provides counsel to the City on the many employment issues affecting the City's large and diverse workforce. Lawyers in the unit represent the

City and its departments in federal and state courts in discrimination lawsuits under Title VII and other pertinent federal and state statutes and local ordinances, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Fair Practices Ordinance.

- **Tax & Revenue Unit-** Responsible for enforcing the collection of Philadelphia taxes, water debt, and other receivables, representing the City in trial and appellate tax cases, advising the administration and City Council on tax issues, and drafting tax legislation.
- **Regulatory Unit-** Represents the City in a wide variety of federal, state, and local regulatory and other legal matters
- **Real Estate & Development Unit-** Represents the City in most of its major economic development initiatives and real estate transactions. Unit attorneys serve as corporate, real estate, and transactional counsel to these clients and are called upon to help structure, negotiate, and document significant transactional matters.
- **Commercial Law Unit-** Responsible for the City's commercial contracts, legal counsel regarding municipal finance matters, the Law Department's technology practice, and contract and regulatory matters related to housing. The Commercial Law Unit is composed of three divisions: Finance and Contracts, Intellectual Property and Housing & Community Development
- **Child Welfare Unit** - The Child Welfare Unit represents the Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS is the child welfare agency responsible for providing safe and permanent solutions for children with at-risk behaviors or are the subject of emotional, sexual, and physical abuse or neglect.
- **The Health & Adult Services Unit (HAS)-** Represents the Department of Public Health, the Department of Behavioral Health & Intellectual disability Services, and the Office of Supportive Housing in the Court of Common Pleas and at various administrative proceedings. HAS provides counsel to the Medical Examiner and regularly attends meetings of the Institutional Review Board. Attorneys provide counsel to all clients regarding statutory and regulatory compliance. Attorneys in this unit litigate a myriad of cases, including the involuntary civil commitment of mentally ill adults and children and the involuntary civil commitment of adults with intellectual disabilities.
- **HIPAA & Privacy Law Unit-** guides the City in adherence to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and counsels all City departments and sub units required to comply with the HIPAA Privacy Rule and Breach Notification Rule. Unit responsibilities include regulatory counseling concerning data-sharing initiatives and research projects involving protected health information (PHI), drafting and negotiating business associate agreements with contractors who access PHI, and providing legal support as needed.

Qualified applicants should:

Have strong interpersonal, communication, analytical, critical thinking, problem solving skills, legal research and writing skills and a strong interest in public service.

To apply: Submit a cover letter and resume in one PDF document via email to externships@law.upenn.edu before 10 AM on November 6, 2020 (include Phila. Law Dept. in your subject line).

Please note that this placement expends a great deal of time and effort scheduling work, securing supervisors, designing programming, creating office space, etc. Thus, students are strongly encouraged to enroll only if they are committed to completing the externship. If you have any questions about this externship, please email externships@law.upenn.edu.