

Volunteer Law Student Summer Internship Program

General Information

- Placement correspondence will be sent via email. For questions, please contact the Court Operations Office. oco.admin@wicourts.gov or 608-266-3121
- You may share an intern with other judges in your county; however, a primary contact is required.
- Internships are open to current law students and are unpaid.

Timeline

- The period for submitting a request for a law student intern is in late spring/early fall. During the request period the link to the form to request an intern will be posted on this page: wicourts.gov/services/attorney/
- While we will continue to accept requests after the initial request period, those submitted by the deadline will be matched first.

Schedule and Commitment

- Internship specifics—including start and end dates, weekly hours, and daily schedules—are coordinated directly between the intern and their assigned judge(s).
- While students traditionally work between 20 and 40 hours per week, most judges offer a degree of flexibility to accommodate student needs.

Volunteer Summer Internship Judge Responsibilities

- Preparation & Planning
 - Set Realistic Expectations: Recognize that while 1L and 2L students have foundational legal knowledge, they require active mentorship.
 - Be prepared to provide specific guidance as they learn to navigate court documents and draft formal legal materials.
- Establish Clear Communication
 - Determine the start and end dates and clarify the expected work arrangement (on-site, remote, or hybrid).
 - Finalize the weekly work schedule (days/hours).
 - *Best Practice*: Share upcoming project details and preparatory readings in advance whenever possible.
- Logistics & Accessibility
 - Arrange any requested accessibility or disability accommodations.
 - Secure necessary equipment (computer, logins) and a designated workspace if needed for in person/hybrid work.
- Provide Orientation Materials
 - Logistics: Local maps, courthouse layout, and parking permits/instructions.
 - Community: Information from the Chamber of Commerce or Visitors Bureau regarding local events.

- Office Standards: County-specific or judge-specific document formats and procedural rules.
- Onboarding
 - Provide any orientation materials and conduct a tour of the courthouse (if intern is in person/hybrid) to introduce the intern to staff.
 - Structured Mentorship: Schedule regular check-in meetings to discuss assignments, provide feedback on research, and address any questions.

Internship Experience

While the intern's primary role is to assist with research and writing, you are encouraged to provide a well-rounded view of the legal system through:

- Courtroom Observation
 - Jury selection and closing arguments
 - Initial appearances and restraining order hearings
 - Mental health commitment hearings
- Expose students to diverse trial advocacy techniques, witness examinations, and judicial-jury dynamics if possible.
- Professional Networking: Facilitate meetings with the District Attorney, defense counsel, the District Court Administrator and/or other court staff.

Academic Credit

- Most students do not receive college credit for summer internships. If they wish to pursue academic credit, the student is responsible for coordinating with their university to determine their eligibility and ensure all institutional requirements are met.

Questions?

Please contact the Court Operations Office. Phone: (608) 266-3121

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