

# AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW FIELD PLACEMENT AGREEMENT

Thank you for hosting a Washington College of Law student extern. Our office is available to serve you and to help ensure a positive experience for you and your extern. Students who receive academic credit for participating in an externship are closely supervised by faculty and are enrolled in a weekly seminar that gives them an opportunity to reflect on their experiences. The faculty supervisor is available at any time to discuss any questions or concerns you may have. You should report any significant issues regarding the extern's performance to the faculty supervisor and/or the Externship Program Director.

WCL places substantial importance on practical legal experience. Externships provide students with an opportunity to learn about legal practice by working on legal matters directly with attorneys, observing day-to-day law-related activities, receiving close supervision and feedback from attorneys, and interacting with clients or other practitioners in the legal field.

The Externship experience provides the student with a unique opportunity to understand the complexities of legal practice and to develop his or her own professional identity. We look to the attorney supervisor to assist the extern in developing insights into legal practice, understanding the concepts underlying their legal work, and to expose the student to decision making processes of the agency or organization. Supervisors can also provide personal guidance that will help the extern in launching his/her own legal career.

All externships consist of two components: (a) a work experience under the supervision of the attorney supervisor; and (b) an academic component under the supervision of the faculty supervisor. The agreement signed by the student with whom you will be working can be found at <https://www.wcl.american.edu/externship/registration/employer/student.cfm>. The faculty obligations can be found at <https://www.wcl.american.edu/externship/obligations.cfm>.

For students to receive academic credit while working at your organization, the following requirements must be met:

### ***General Requirements:***

- Generally, externs may only work for a court, government agency or not-for-profit organization. Externs may work for a law firm only if they are assigned exclusively to pro bono matters and may work for a private company only if the extern is enrolled in the Corporate Counsel Externship Program. Externs may not be paid, except for out-of-pocket expenses.

Students may not extern for a for-profit law firm unless they are assigned exclusively to pro bono matters (and the firm does not bill for the externs' time).

Pro bono matters are those for which the clients are not charged for the attorney's time and fall under civil rights statutes or the CJA. Students may also enroll in the Corporation Counsel Externship Program.

Students may receive stipends for out of pocket expenses (Metro, parking). In addition, students may receive funding from 3rd parties.

**To ensure that the students' educational goals are being achieved in the field placement, the field placement must agree to the following:**

- ***Skills Development:* Externs will be provided with substantial legal experience that is reasonably similar to the experience of a lawyer advising or representing a client; the extern will not be assigned non-legal or clerical activities;**

Substantive legal work is work that requires applying knowledge and skills acquired in law school, as well as work that would customarily be performed by lawyers advising or representing a client or engaging in other lawyering tasks. Examples of such substantive legal work include researching legal issues, drafting legal memoranda, interviewing clients and witnesses, attending judicial and administrative proceedings, preparing comments or testimony related to administrative regulations, hearings, and drafting litigation documents. The extern should be given a variety of assignments that provide him/her with a breadth of legal skills and knowledge.

Non-legal and clerical work should not be assigned on a regular basis. Such work includes photocopying, database management, transcription, word processing, updating websites, filing, scheduling, answering of phones, fundraising or event planning. Externs may not be assigned primarily to repetitive work assignments involving little actual legal research or original writing such as drafting compendia of laws or procedures.

- ***Supervision:* The extern will be directly supervised by a licensed attorney who is employed by the field placement.**

The extern must be directly supervised by a licensed attorney employed by the field placement ("Attorney Supervisor"), who will assure the educational quality of the experience and include exposure to a broad range of lawyering skills. The requirement that the Attorney Supervisor be licensed may be waived by the Externship Program Director, upon request if the organization does not engage in litigation or other legal work requiring bar admission.

If the Supervising Attorney is going to be out of the office for an extended period of time, another attorney must be given supervisory responsibilities until the initial supervisor returns. Any temporary or permanent change in the Attorney Supervisor must be clearly communicated to the extern and to the Externship Program. The extern may work with and be supervised by other attorney within

the agency or organization as well, provided that the Attorney Supervisor continues to maintain regular contact.

- **The extern and the Supervising Attorney will work on-site.**

The extern must work on-site in the same general location as the Supervising Attorney. If permitted by the employer, full-time students may work remotely up to 10% of their required hours and students enrolled in the WCL Evening Program may work remotely for up to 20% of their required hours. Hours worked remotely must be included in the time log and noted as such.

- **The Supervising Attorney will assign multiple opportunities for performance and will provide regular feedback and opportunities for self-evaluation;**

**The extern** must be provided with multiple opportunities for performance of various legal skills **and** may not be limited to observation. Students must have the opportunity to integrate doctrine, theory, skills, and legal ethics as they are engaged in performance of one or more professional skills.

The Attorney Supervisor must have regular contact with the extern throughout the course of the semester, providing specific, individualized and timely feedback. The extern and **Supervising Attorney will meet at least weekly**. The subject matter of these meetings might include the self-evaluation by the student, evaluating the extern's performance over the course of the prior week, developing work plans for the following weeks, discussing the activities of the agency or organization, and analyzing particular successes and problems that arise in the course of the externship.

- **The extern and the Supervising Attorney will meet at least weekly.**

- The Attorney Supervisor must provide the extern regular substantive feedback on work assignments. The Attorney Supervisor must establish a method of communication, whether through meetings or email correspondence, to allow the extern to ask clarifying questions or request additional assignments.

- ***Observation and Opportunities for Reflection: The extern will have opportunities to observe legal practice and to discuss these observations with supervisors and other staff members.***

The extern will have opportunities to observe court proceedings, client/staff/strategy meetings, and other appropriate professional activities. The extern will meet with his/her supervisor, other attorneys and staff to discuss his/her observations, experiences, and other issues relevant to the profession.

- **Specific meetings/written requirements**
  - ***Orientation: At the start of the externship, externs will receive an orientation, including a discussion of office procedures, and confidentiality, and will be given adequate work space.***

The Attorney Supervisor should ensure that the extern is provided with a designated workplace and the tools reasonably necessary to complete assignments. The student should work in physical proximity to the other attorneys in the office.

Field placements must provide an orientation at the outset of the externship. Such orientation should include a brief overview of the mission of the agency or organization and the general legal issues presently before it; guidelines and resources for performing whatever lawyering tasks are assigned to the extern; office policies and procedures, including confidentiality requirements; introduction to others in the office with whom the extern is likely to interact; and a tour of the facilities, library, office equipment, etc.

- ***Goals Meeting: Within the first two weeks of the externship, attorney supervisors will meet with the extern to discuss the extern's goals (learning outcomes) and the attorney's expectations, and will develop a work plan for the semester;***

The Attorney Supervisor must meet with the extern early in the semester to discuss their goals and learning outcomes for the externship, including the professional skills students should develop, and the anticipated opportunities for performance and observation. They should develop a realistic work plan that will allow the extern to meet his/her academic and career goals.

During the meeting, the Supervising Attorney should review the extern's anticipated assignments and methods for feedback (below) and discuss any other specific opportunities for performance.

- ***Mid-Semester Evaluation: At mid-semester, the attorney supervisor will meet with the extern to review the student's self-assessment discuss the extern's progress toward meeting the goals developed during the initial meeting.***

At mid-semester, students will conduct a self-evaluation of their progress in meeting their goals for the semester. The Attorney Supervisor must meet with the extern to discuss the student's progress, provide feedback, recommendations for improvement, and review whether additional opportunities for performance should be provided. These meetings must take place between weeks four and six of the summer semester and between weeks six and eight during the fall and spring semesters.

- **Final Evaluation: Attorney supervisors will provide faculty and externs with a written final evaluation of the student's work product and conduct in the work place and will provide the law school with confirmation of the extern's hours.**

At the conclusion of the Externship, the Attorney Supervisor must submit a detailed evaluation of the extern's overall performance on the form provided by the law school. This will be shared with the student and the faculty supervisor. Students are required to keep a contemporaneous record of their hours. The attorney supervisor must verify the extern's work hours at the conclusion of the externship.

Supervisor Information  I have responsibility for the extern's supervision.

I certify that this placement meets and will adhere to the aforementioned criteria.

Name:

Bar Passage State:

Bar Passage Year:

If no Bar Passage, please explain:

This completed agreement will be reviewed by the extern and the Externship Program prior to the completion of the approval process. Attorney supervisors are invited to call the Director of the WCL Externship Program, Avis Sanders, at 202-274-4072, with any questions or comments regarding this agreement or any other matters.

*The American University Washington College of Law requires that employers who participate in the Externship Program not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. We also require that employers maintain a policy against sexual harassment. By participating in the Externship Program, employers are deemed to agree with this policy.*

Specific Objectives -- Information Specific To This Student

Externs may have many goals for their externship and can include:

- knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law,
- legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context;
- exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system;

- other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession. [ABA Standard 302]

To ensure that externs are able to meet these objectives, please provide information specific to each student that describes the extern's anticipated duties, the legal skills in which they should expect to gain competency and the feedback and supervision you plan to provide.

Here are the **extern's** duties that were included in the Externship Database Listing:

(imported from Externship Database for each specific externship placement)

In addition to the information included in the Externship Database Listing, please provide the following information, for the student who will be externing with you this semester:

What specific responsibilities ("opportunities for performance") do you anticipate assigning to this student? Please be as specific as possible. (These duties can be modified during the semester, as necessary)

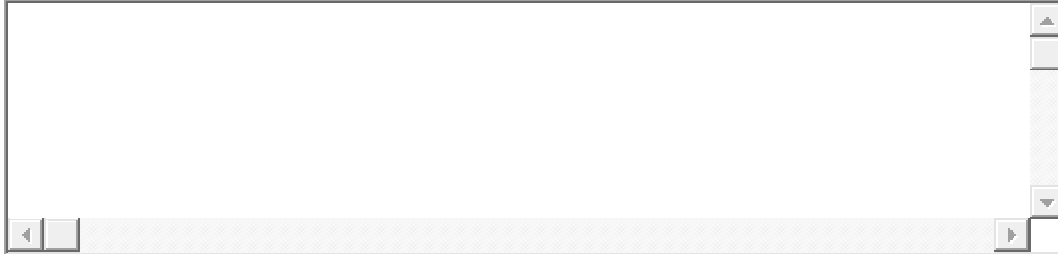


What skills set(s) should an extern at your office expect to further develop?

- Client Interviews/Counseling
- Collaboration
- Conflict Resolution
- Cultural Competency
- Document Drafting
- Fact Investigation, Development
- Legal Presentations/Public Speaking
- Legal Research and Analysis
- Negotiating
- Organization and Management of Legal Work
- Policy or Legislative Work
- Professionalism
- Transactional Law
- Trial Advocacy/Litigation

Other (please describe):

How will you ensure the student receives regular and timely supervision and feedback from Supervising Attorneys?



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**The employer agreed to these terms on (DATE) at (TIME).**