

Department of Environmental Protection Office of General Counsel's Internship Program

I. Purpose

To enable law students (interns) to the practice of law from the perspective of a public-sector attorney. Interns will participate in the Office of General Counsel's (OGC) diverse practice areas, such as administrative, appellate, environmental, land use, legislative, litigation, finance, and real estate law. Each intern will have an opportunity to explore our practice areas under the supervision of knowledgeable, experienced attorneys.

II. Statement to Law Schools

Are you interested in using your legal skills to protect the environment? If so, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is an unmatched place to volunteer. DEP is the lead agency in state government for environmental management and stewardship. DEP is one of the more diverse agencies in state government, protecting Florida's air, water and land.

The Office of General Counsel provides legal counsel and represents DEP. The Department's legal counsel focuses on Florida's environmental priorities, such as restoring America's Everglades; improving air quality; restoring and protecting the water quality in Florida's springs, lakes, rivers and coastal waters; conserving environmentally sensitive lands; and providing citizens and visitors with unmatched recreational adventures. Florida's environmental programs--and the laws affecting them -- are often in the national forefront, affording exceptional opportunities to work on issues setting national precedents.

OGC coordinates with leading law schools to recruit top students from throughout the United States. Intern activities will generally include basic legal work as well as support activities normally performed by attorneys and/or paralegals. The work environment will be educational and intended primarily for the benefit of the intern. The work performed by an intern is not intended and will not displace work normally performed by paid, regular employees. All work will be performed under the close supervision of an attorney.

III. Program

A. Time Frames

For the fall and spring semester, the internship generally commences shortly after the semester begins. The start date for interns will be flexible depending on the commitments and schedule of the intern and OGC. Likewise, the duration of the internship typically will run the course of the intern's semester, with adequate flexibility to accommodate class schedules. Generally, the

fall and spring semester internships will not exceed 20 hours per week. Schedules are determined by mutual agreement between the Internship Coordinator and intern.

The summer internship typically begins shortly after the spring semester ends and ends a week or two before the fall semester starts, with adequate flexibility for summer plans. Generally, the summer internship will not exceed 40 hours per week. Schedules are determined by mutual agreement between the Internship Coordinator and intern.

Internship hours must be conducted during the Department's normal business hours.

B. Location

Interns are generally required to work in OGC's office Tallahassee, alongside and under the direct supervision of our attorneys.

OGC interns are generally not approved to work in DEP's district offices or other locations.

C. Compensation – Interns Do Not Receive Any Form of Financial Compensation from the Department

Typically, the internship is completed by a law student for the purpose of earning pro bono experience or academic credit. OGC interns do not receive any form of financial compensation. The internship does not constitute a paid position with the Department and an intern is not entitled wages or remuneration for any time devoted or spent as an intern.

- Interns are not guaranteed, nor should they expect, employment at the end of the internship.
- Interns are generally not permitted to work for another law office while completing their internship with the Department.

D. Job Description

Each internship experience is unique, based primarily on OGC's needs and the calendar of work that arises during a given semester. Generally, interns should expect to enjoy many of the following opportunities:

1. Assignments that ensure an informative exposure to many of the Department's practice areas and attorneys. Often interns research and draft legal memoranda, prepare motions, assist with preparation for trials or administrative hearings, engage in developing administrative rules, observe depositions, assist in preparing rule packages, or assist in preparing the necessary legal documents for real property transactions;
2. Inside exposure to how the Department runs and operates, potentially including meeting with top officials from federal or state agencies;

3. Potentially attending arguments or trials in federal or state courts and hearings before the Division of Administrative Hearings; and
4. Social outings with the opportunity to interact with our lawyers on an informal basis.

To accomplish this, interns generally spend one-half of their internship assisting the litigation sections (Defense and Enforcement) and one-half of their internship assisting the program sections (Programs). The intern will meet with the attorney generating the assignment and gather the specific goals and relevant facts. Interns are encouraged to ask questions as well as review any file or background material available.

The Intern Coordinator will schedule regular meetings with all interns to review the status of work assignments as well as answer questions and provide guidance. These meeting will be determined after individual intern summer schedules are set.

V. Pro bono and Externship opportunities

OGC often receives requests from law students to fulfill their pro bono or externship requirement through service with OGC. OGC will consider such requests at the time they are received on a case-by-case basis.