

Student Intern Position Description

Name and Location of Agency:

Santa Cruz County Public Defender's Office
2103 N. Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Contact:

Santa Cruz County Public Defender's Office
Attn: Nancy Romero, Chief Investigator
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Functions of the Agency:

The role of the Public Defender's Office is to provide quality representation to indigent criminal clients. People who cannot afford to hire a lawyer have the constitutional right to a court-appointed lawyer, which in most cases is the Public Defender. This office employs about 25 attorneys and 7 full-time and part-time investigators.

Intern Duties and Responsibilities:

Interns will be assigned to the Investigations Bureau of the Public Defender's Office. You will work with investigators and trial attorneys. Areas of law include the defense of misdemeanor charges from driving under the influence or domestic violence, to felony charges such as assault with a deadly weapon and murder. Duties include writing letters to request records from law enforcement agencies, medical facilities, and other businesses. You will also be asked to prepare and serve subpoenas, locate and interview witnesses, and write reports based on those interviews. Interns are often asked to take pictures of physical evidence and photographs and measurements at the scene of the alleged crime. You will also be exposed to various resources and databases commonly used to locate witnesses and gather background information.

Spanish-speaking interns will also be asked to interpret for attorney/client meetings in the office and in the Santa Cruz County Jail facilities. You will also be asked to translate written documents.

Educational Requirements:

The internship is best suited for undergraduate students majoring in Legal Studies/Politics, Latin American and Latino Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Community Studies, or related fields. In addition, students contemplating law school or studying for the LSAT will find this internship extremely valuable.

Skills, Training or Qualifications:

The following qualifications are preferred: the ability to take direction well, have a good attitude, work well with others, have strong organizational skills, speak, read, and write well in English. Good communication skills and general maturity are a must. Spanish speakers are **highly** encouraged to apply.

Interns will participate in an 8 hr. training day prior to starting, and will receive on the job training by shadowing and assisting other investigators. They will also have the opportunity to observe court proceedings and attend investigator training sessions.

Additional Requirements:

Because travel throughout the county is necessary, interns must have access to a reliable car and must have a cell phone.

Time Commitment:

A minimum of 16-24 hours per week for at least two quarters or one semester is required. Hours may be scheduled Monday through Friday between 8:15 a.m. and 5 p.m. Applicants willing to extend the duration of their internship typically gain a more in-depth experience. Summer internships are available.

Benefits Available to Intern:

Although this is an unpaid position, interns are offered an opportunity to explore career options, build resumes, network with professionals in their fields of interest and gain hands-on experience in a legal setting. The internship offers students an opportunity to experience real-life situations within a legal office that complement their academic studies and career goals. This is a unique opportunity to get an insider's perspective on the workings of the criminal justice system.

Applying for the internship:

Please submit a resume and cover letter to the address below or email it to nromero@scdefenders.com.

Your cover letter is your opportunity to help us understand why you are the best candidate for this position. It provides a chance to elaborate on your background as listed in your resume. It also demonstrates written communication skills and style. It allows a more in-depth description of career goals, personal interests, academic accomplishments, and community involvement. Share your expectations of the internship experience, including what you'd like to accomplish; what issues/projects/assignments are of particular interest; and what skills, knowledge and expertise you hope to gain. Be sure to also include the approximate date (or dates) that you can start the internship and the preferred duration.

Applications for Summer and Fall are accepted prior to April with selections made in May. Applications for Winter and Spring are taken prior to October with selections made in November.