



# BAY AREA LEGAL AID

WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE

## Law Student Internships

Bay Area Legal Aid (BayLegal) seeks dynamic law students with a strong commitment to public interest and social justice advocacy to help provide comprehensive legal services to the poor.

**BayLegal** is the largest staff based non-profit law firm providing free civil legal services to low-income individuals and families in the San Francisco Bay Area. We provide services on a regional basis through local offices and clinics located in the following Bay Area counties: Alameda (Oakland); Contra Costa (Richmond); Marin; Napa; San Francisco; San Mateo (Redwood City); and Santa Clara (San Jose) counties. Additionally, BayLegal has a regional Legal Advice Line which conducts intake and provides advice and counsel. With six regional offices, and 100+ staff members, BayLegal is uniquely positioned to help people across county lines. BayLegal assist clients in four main priority areas: (1) Domestic Violence Prevention; (2) Housing Preservation; (3) Economic Security; and (4) Health Access.

### **BayLegal Law Clerk Program:**

BayLegal selects approximately 20-30 law students to work in our offices during the school year and approximately 40 students during the summer. Under the supervision of BayLegal staff attorneys, interns will have the opportunity to build cases from the ground-up; including conducting: client interviews; initial case assessments; obtaining discovery and other evidence; preparing clients for trials; writing briefs and other legal memoranda; assisting self-represented litigants; community outreach and education; and representing clients at administrative hearings and state court hearings/trials. Interns also assist in drafting writs of mandamus to Superior Court and California appellate courts and participating in broader impact litigation. Interns often work on projects and cases that have a wide-ranging and lasting impact on our client communities.

BayLegal encourages students who have completed their Evidence class so to become certified by the CA State Bar to represent clients in court. During the school year, students commonly work 10-15 hours per week. During the summer, Interns work on a full-time basis. BayLegal has internships in all of our priority areas including specific projects listed below:

#### **Disability Income Social Security Advocacy (Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose & Richmond):**

SSI and SSDI Social Security benefits are for people who are unable to maintain employment due to physical and or mental impairment and who have limited income and limited resources. Students who have an expressed interest or experience working with individuals with mental and/or physical disabilities preferred.

**Eviction after Foreclosure Advocacy (San Jose):** Santa Clara County has one of the highest rates of foreclosure in California. Many of the individuals affected by foreclosure are tenants who have special protections under both State and Federal Law. Interns will work with supervising attorneys to prevent homelessness and preserve the rights of tenants who live in foreclosed homes.

**Youth Justice Project (YJP) (Oakland):** YJP is an innovative project in Alameda County providing comprehensive advocacy to poor youth with disabilities and mental health needs. YJP focuses on children in, previously in, or at risk of foster care or delinquency who have been denied or not informed about important benefits and services for which they are entitled. YJP interns assist staff provide a wide range of legal representation and assistance to ensure access to essential public benefits, special education services, housing, and health care services.

**Housing Preservation Advocacy (Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose and Richmond):** Interns work on homelessness prevention, preservation of affordable housing and fighting illegal evictions. Interns



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interview clients, prepare legal pleadings and see a full civil litigation case during a short amount of time (including possible jury trial).

**Immigration Advocacy on Behalf of Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors (Redwood City, Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose and Richmond):** BayLegal provides comprehensive legal services to low-income immigrant survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. VAWA Self-Petitions and U Visa Non-Immigrant Petitions are means to immigration relief for survivors who are either immediate family members of abusive U.S. Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents OR who cooperate with the investigation and/or prosecution of the crimes perpetrated against them. Learn how to assess eligibility, prepare immigration pleadings and work directly with immigrant survivors.

**Legal Barriers to Employment Project (“LBEP”) (San Francisco):** LBEP provides comprehensive legal services to individuals on welfare who are facing legal problems that prevent them from gaining employment and escaping poverty. Staff and interns help eliminate legal barriers to employment through a full range of legal remedies, such as criminal records, suspended drivers license, threatened evictions, and credit problems -- you name it. Feel the satisfaction of helping solve a legal problem and see your client get a job and get off welfare.

**Poverty Prevention Advocacy Project (Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose and Richmond):** Under BayLegal supervision, interns assist clients obtain desperately needed health coverage, welfare and disability benefits. Along with direct individual representation, Interns work on existing impact litigation. Interns become familiar with Medi-Cal, Medicare, Healthy Families, CalWORKs, General Assistance, Food Stamps, Supplemental Security Income (“SSI”), and Social Security Disability Insurance (“SSDI”) as well as general health access issues.

**Housing Law Clinic (Pittsburg Superior Court):** Under BayLegal supervision, interns have the opportunity to directly serve a large number of *pro per* litigants in the courthouse and become familiar with all stages of an eviction proceeding. The interns learn to spot legal and factual issues and draft pleadings and motions. Interns also have the opportunity to build a case from the ground-up for cases BayLegal accepts for representation.

**Qualifications:** Internship applicants should have completed their first year of law school. Candidates must possess a passion for social justice and poverty related issues, as well as sensitivity to working with people from diverse backgrounds. Special consideration will be given to students who have a demonstrated commitment to serving low income or disadvantaged communities. Students who speak Spanish, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Russian, or other Southeast Asian languages are encouraged to apply. BayLegal welcomes and gives preference to students who can commit to more than one semester. Although funding is limited, work-study students receive between \$13.50 per hour and \$15 per hour. Students are encouraged to apply for funding through their law school and other grant opportunities (please contact us if we can be of assistance).

**To apply:** Internships are available throughout the year and applications are accepted on an ongoing basis year-round until all positions are filled (for summer positions we recommend submitting your application before March 1<sup>st</sup>). Please submit a completed *BayLegal Law Clerk Application* (available [www.baylegal.org](http://www.baylegal.org)) indicating your office(s) and project(s) preference along with a copy of your resume, cover letter and writing sample to: **Email:** [probono@baylegal.org](mailto:probono@baylegal.org) or by mail:

Bay Area Legal Aid – Law Clerk Program, 1735 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94612

**Questions:** Please contact Genevieve Richardson, Director of Pro Bono Activities [probono@baylegal.org](mailto:probono@baylegal.org)