
Careers in Government



OFFICE OF PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAMS
UCLA SCHOOL OF LAW

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ABOUT UCLA SCHOOL OF LAW

UCLA School of Law, founded in 1949, is the youngest major law school in the nation and has established a tradition of innovation in its approach to teaching, research, and scholarship. With a rigorous public interest curriculum and the David J. Epstein Program in Public Interest Law and Policy, the school is a preeminent training ground for students committed to careers in public service.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAMS

The Office of Public Interest Programs strives to enhance UCLA School of Law's commitment to public interest by offering an array of services to students and alumni. The Office's principal goal is to encourage students and alumni to embrace a career that incorporates an ongoing commitment to public service.

INTRODUCTION

“Over the last eight years, I have endeavored to build trust with residents, and show them that their government can develop and execute plans to turn around the future prospects of our community.”

- Andre Quintero, Mayor of the City of El Monte, UCLA School of Law Class of 2001

“Working in a large, bureaucratic state agency presents many challenges, and an equal number of opportunities. I have learned so much about what it takes to implement creative ideas to maximize impact and efficiency, all the while striving to honor the fundamental intent of the law and the purpose of the agency: to offer broad protections to workers.”

- Julia Figueira-McDonough, Staff Attorney, California Labor Commissioner’s Office, UCLA School of Law Class of 1998

A career in government offers lawyers gratifying and dynamic ways to be involved in public service. *Careers in Government* serves as a tool to help chart the best possible career path for law students and law graduates seeking to embark on this pursuit. From every level of government—federal, state, and local—lawyers are involved in defending and enforcing government policies, as well as developing government practices. In these roles, attorneys are employed to work with executive branch offices, agencies, legislative bodies, and courts. As a result, a career in government is multifaceted, with a breadth of opportunity.

In an effort to illuminate various government career trajectories, this Guide is divided into seven parts. The first part contains narratives from UCLA School of Law alumni working in the federal, state, and local, government. The second part contains narratives from UCLA School of Law students who have worked with various governmental offices across the country. The third part describes the career opportunities available in federal, state, and local government. The fourth part discusses ways to prepare for a career in government by providing recommended coursework and methods for obtaining internship opportunities in the field. The fifth part reviews ways to interview with government agencies for summer and post-graduate positions. The sixth part highlights ways to obtain post-graduate entry-level positions through Government Honors Programs and fellowships. Finally, the seventh part contains helpful advice for students when preparing for interviews with government agencies, including sample questions used during actual interviews for these positions.

Because careers in government span a multitude of jurisdictions and agencies, this Guide is meant to serve as a starting point for students. After reviewing the Guide, students should identify the level of government and type of agency in which they are interested. In addition, students should thoroughly research the entity, as each government organization abides by individual jurisdictional hiring practices and rules.

I. ALUMNI NARRATIVES

There are multiple and diverse paths to pursuing a career in government. UCLA School of Law alumni exemplify the varied career paths that can lead to a satisfying career at every level of government. These alumni narratives also highlight the different types of government work that are available in a diversity of institutional settings.

ANNETTE B. ALMAZAN '02

Special Assistant to the Gaming Inspector General, Office of the Gaming Inspector General, New York State Gaming Commission, New York, NY

During my childhood, volunteer work and public service were encouraged in my home and primary schools. Prior to attending law school, I joined Teach for America ('97, Bay Area). I recognized how access to quality education positively impacted my life (and my parents' lives before me), and I wanted to bring my love of learning to students who did not have the resources I was privileged to have. I enjoyed teaching more than I thought I would and seriously considered making it my career, but I had always wanted to be a lawyer, specifically a prosecutor. I told my high school students that I was leaving so I could contribute to society in a different way, helping to make communities safer by being a prosecutor.

After a detour as a law fellow, where I used my skills as a former high school teacher to assist law students who were teaching the law to Washington, D.C. public high school students, I became a prosecutor in Queens County, New York, where I was born and raised. I was lucky enough to work as a prosecutor for over four years, handling misdemeanors, felonies, appeals, and homicide investigations in my own community. However, the increasing cost of living in New York compelled me to make the difficult choice to leave. I wanted to stay in government and transitioned to working in-house at the NYC Department of Probation, handling matters related to supervision and sentencing.

After several years, I began working in government oversight at the NYC Department of Investigation. These days, public corruption is a hot button issue. Certainly, while I have always seen government as ensuring a fair, safe, and just society, it is important to hold government accountable. Allegations vary greatly, including conflicts of interest, employee misconduct, gross management, and contract fraud. My experience as a prosecutor gave me the foundation for conducting systematic and thorough investigations. It is gratifying to know that investigations in which I have participated have exposed issues and led to small and large changes.

In 2015, the opportunity presented itself to work in my current position, which is part of a relatively new office. This position has allowed me to influence how the office develops and expanded my knowledge in a completely different area of law: gaming and racing regulation. Working in government can be as diverse as it would be in the private sector, and I would be happy to speak with anyone interested in pursuing a career in government.

ANDREW BRUNSDEN '07

Associate Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation, New York, NY

I am an Associate Commissioner for New York City in its Department of Investigation (DOI), which is the independent inspector general for the City. As a member of DOI's executive management, I supervise four investigative units of approximately 150 attorneys, investigators, data analysts, and auditors who investigate corruption and mismanagement in City government involving, among other areas, City elected officials, social service agencies, nonprofit organizations, and financial, technology, and personnel administration agencies. I previously served as a Senior Inspector General supervising one of these investigative units of twenty-five staff members. Our investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official, or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. Like other

law enforcement agencies, we combat corruption through systemic investigations that can lead to high-impact arrests and prosecutions to hold criminal actors accountable. However, our role is unique in that our investigations also address deficiencies in the City’s internal controls and operations by identifying shortcomings and making policy recommendations to improve the way the City runs.

Our investigations typically begin with a complaint from the public, a referral from another City agency, a media report, or our proactive identification of a matter requiring our attention. Our investigators develop the facts of our cases by issuing subpoenas, reviewing documents, conducting field operations such as surveillance and executing search warrants, and taking testimony under oath. In my role, I manage investigative staff in taking these steps to advance their cases. When we uncover potential criminal wrongdoing, I coordinate with federal, state, and local prosecutors regarding whether to bring criminal charges and develop evidence for grand jury presentations and trial. Additionally, when we find operational issues requiring reform, I work with staff to draft reports of our findings and coordinate with City agencies to remedy those issues by implementing our recommendations.

I am proud of our team’s investigations and DOI’s impact on promoting integrity, public safety, and good government in New York City: we are holding elected officials and multiple non-profit executives accountable for corruption through the misappropriation of government grants; we are protecting vulnerable populations such as foster children, public benefit recipients, and homeless families by investigating fraud and mismanagement in agencies that serve these populations; we uncovered theft by a former procurement director of a local prosecutor’s office and authored a plan for the agency to tighten its fiscal controls; we issued recommendations to the City regarding the overhaul of its 911 emergency call-taking system, as well as future large-scale technology projects; and we exposed mismanagement, waste, and conflicts of interest at the City’s Board of Elections.

As advice to law students considering a career in government, I suggest learning as much as you can about the various opportunities for lawyers in government: conduct research of available opportunities at all levels of government and speak with alumni working in government. In addition to the more well-known options such as working as a prosecutor or public defender, a number of opportunities exist within government for enforcement and investigative attorneys, transactional attorneys, and attorneys who advise officials on policy, compliance, and program development. I also recommend identifying your areas of interest and gaining experience in those areas to be in a better position to secure the government employment you are seeking. In my case, after two federal clerkships, I worked at a law firm that specialized in government enforcement cases. This experience prepared me to take on my current role as a manager and attorney leading significant anticorruption investigations. Ultimately, you should, in the words of D.H. Lawrence, “find your deepest impulse and follow it.” Being driven by your passion is the best path to fulfillment.

JULIA FIGUEIRA-MCDONOUGH ‘98

Staff Attorney, California Labor Commissioner’s Office, Los Angeles, CA

As an attorney, I have always considered myself first and foremost an advocate for those who are underrepresented in, victimized by, or excluded altogether from both our civil and criminal justice systems. As a law student, I pictured myself using my legal skills and degree to tear down systemic barriers to access to justice for marginalized communities, specifically low-income

workers. I spent my summers working for a labor union and a union-side law firm, and one semester as a full-time extern for the Federal Public Defender. If you had told me when I first started practicing that at some point in my career I would work in law enforcement, I would not have believed it. Yet that is exactly what I have done for almost a decade. It has been challenging and eye-opening and, most importantly, it has made me a better advocate.

After ten years at legal and social justice non-profits, litigating complex wage and hour and discrimination cases on behalf of low-wage immigrant workers, and lobbying for legislative and administrative reform, I found myself inspired by then-New York Attorney General Elliot Spitzer's groundbreaking prosecutions of predatory businesses and employers. The idea that a prosecutor could use existing law and the power of the government to hold businesses accountable for the devastating human consequences of their criminal conduct was compelling to me. Luckily, the City Attorney of Los Angeles agreed, and hired me to prosecute cases of wage theft and related workplace crimes. During my six years as a Deputy City Attorney, I prosecuted predatory employers in the garment, day laborer, construction and car wash industries. In the process, I learned my way around a criminal courtroom and, through trial and some error, gained a deeper understanding of the powerful legal tools at a prosecutor's disposal. In our largest case, the court ordered restitution of over a million dollars in unpaid wages to more than 300 car wash workers and—something relatively unheard of in employment cases—jail time for the individual employers.

One of the best parts of being a prosecutor was that when I went to court, I got to say that I was appearing on behalf of the People of the State of California. To me, those words were loaded with meaning: they meant that I represented the individual workers whose livelihood had been stolen by unscrupulous employers; that the well-being of our entire state was inextricably connected to their ability to seek justice; and that the government was, for once, recognizing that poverty is a form of violence, and dedicating its resources to enforce the law on behalf of those whose indigence would otherwise subject them to unchecked economic exploitation. Every appearance was an opportunity to educate the bench about the harsh realities of low-wage work and the illegal conduct of the bad actors who profited from it. I am hopeful that those moments helped pave the way not just for successful wage theft prosecutions, but also for a broader understanding of what law enforcement could and should do on behalf of the People.

For the past four years, I have been a staff attorney for California Labor Commissioner Julie Su, the state's chief labor law enforcement officer. In this position, I advise our staff (and the Commissioner herself) on how to interpret and enforce the Labor Code. My duties range widely, and have included defending our determinations on contentious legal issues, drafting regulations, implementing cutting-edge worker-protection legislation, and counseling our fledgling Criminal Investigation Unit.

Working in a large, bureaucratic state agency presents many challenges, and an equal number of opportunities. I have learned so much about what it takes to implement creative ideas to maximize impact and efficiency, all the while striving to honor the fundamental intent of the law and the purpose of the agency: to offer broad protections to workers. I have also gained invaluable insight on how the campaigns we wage for justice—whether by legislative reform, policy advocacy, political organizing or litigation—must anticipate and account for the day-to-day realities of enforcement if we truly want to see their promise realized.

BRYAN LEE '13

Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Civil Rights, Washington, D.C.

Over the years, I have worked for the federal government in various capacities, all focusing on civil rights issues. Currently, I am an Attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The OCR ensures that recipients of DOJ financial assistance comply with federal laws that prohibit discrimination in employment and the delivery of services or benefits based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, and disability. These recipients include local law enforcement agencies, state departments of correction, and state and local courts. As an Attorney with OCR, I review complaints from civilians and inmates and conduct compliance reviews of DOJ recipients for noncompliance issues.

When I interned with the DOJ Civil Rights Division (CRT) the summer after my 2L year, I was amazed to learn of the incredible opportunities available within federal government to do civil rights work. That summer, I interned with the CRT Federal Coordination and Compliance Section, which enforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. I primarily investigated state courts for language access issues, a form of discrimination based on national origin.

After law school, I had the tremendous opportunity to join the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as a Presidential Management Fellow (PMF). As a fellow, I worked for the FTA Office of Civil Rights, where, similar to OCR, I ensured that recipients of FTA funding complied with federal laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, and disability. There, I reviewed complaints against local transit agencies regarding bus, rail, and subway service and conducted compliance reviews. I also managed the FTA's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, which is designed to remedy ongoing discrimination and the continuing effects of past discrimination in federally-assisted transit contracting markets.

During my fellowship, I was required to participate in at least one rotation outside my home office. For one of my rotations, I worked as an Attorney with the CRT Special Litigation Section and was part of the team that investigated the Ferguson Police Department and Municipal Court for patterns and practice of discrimination against African Americans. In this position, I was able to conduct a deep dive into the workings of the Police Department and Court system and discovered the documents and data that led to our findings. I worked on the Findings Report, helped host a DOJ Town Hall in Ferguson, and took part in the initial process for settlement discussions with the City. This investigation and the report it produced set a milestone for both the Department and my career, setting a benchmark for future DOJ police misconduct investigations and giving me insight on what I could achieve with my law degree.

After the end of the PMF program, I joined the DOT Office of the General Counsel (OGC) where I drafted and reviewed regulations, guidance, reports, and directives regarding the Use of Weapons and Deadly Force by DOT Security Personnel, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's Safety Oversight, Maritime Administration's Federal Ship Financing Program and Cargo Preference, and National Highway System Design Standards. I was responsible for responding to FOIA requests from the public and requests for information from the US Congress. Working in OGC gave me the chance to explore new areas of law, including issues related to emergency preparedness, climate change, and negotiating competing interests during the rulemaking process.

I find that the federal government is an incredible place to work. The PMF program allowed me to work in a great agency that I never otherwise considered while exploring terrific opportunities in other offices and agencies. Moreover, the federal government provides great benefits and work-life balance. Besides positions open to the public, there are a few special paths for law school graduates to enter federal government service, including the Presidential Management Fellowship program as well as various honors programs.

JEFFREY PRIETO '95

General Counsel, Los Angeles Community College District, Los Angeles, CA

I am proud and fortunate to have a legal career in public service. I don't come from an educated family. However, I learned how to work hard from my family. My grandfather worked in a citrus packing house in Santa Paula, California for over fifty years. He loved his job. He and my grandmother supported my family in so many different ways, including financially. My mother was our primary financial earner who worked a variety of jobs. While we were growing up, she worked a split schedule so that she could be home when we left for and returned from school. Yet, it is not enough to work hard if opportunities and access are limited. As a Chicano, my opportunities are a direct result of the activism of my community. My career in public service is my attempt to repay my debt to those in my community who sacrificed and yet were not personally able to benefit from their efforts.

I chose to attend the UCLA School of Law because I was encouraged by UCLA's commitment to diversity and inspired by the work of Antonia Hernández, a UCLA School of Law graduate recognized for her lifelong devotion to social justice. I knew I wanted to serve in some public interest area, but lacked the knowledge and experience to know exactly what I could actually accomplish. Clerking at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund in Los Angeles and the Natural Resources Defense Council in New York solidified my desire to seek a public interest career. UCLA Professor Jerry Lopez provided the needed guidance and counsel to help me start on my legal career path. I will always be grateful to UCLA for not only nurturing my desire, but also providing the tools for me to pursue my dreams.

I am currently the General Counsel of the Los Angeles Community College District, the largest community college district in the nation with nine accredited colleges, over 250,000 enrolled students, and an annual budget of \$5.8 billion. I have also served as the General Counsel of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), one of the largest federal agencies. Prior to USDA, I served in a variety of roles at the United States Department of Justice Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD), culminating with my appointment as its General Counsel. At ENRD, I was involved in some of this nation's most important environmental legal cases.

I have served in organizations with incredible missions and some of the finest and most accomplished attorneys in their practice areas. Yet, as I look back on my legal career, I truly do not focus on the cases or achievements, but on the relationships and friendships gained and shared with my colleagues. There is nothing more fulfilling than the camaraderie and joy of working long hours with limited resources and like-minded friends in pursuit of noble results.

ANDRE QUINTERO '01

Mayor, City of El Monte, CA & Deputy City Attorney, Los Angeles, CA

When I was sixteen years old, the American Legion sent me to Boys' State in Sacramento and Boys' Nation in Washington, D.C., and in doing so set me on my current life's path. I have the honor of putting my legal education to use as a Prosecutor for the City of Los Angeles and as Mayor of my hometown, the City of El Monte. While the Legion set me on this path, UCLA gave me the skills and tools I needed to be an advocate for the People of the State of California and the People of the City of El Monte.

The focus of this piece will be on my service as Mayor, but for anyone interested in giving back to their communities through elected office, having a career is step one. With the exception of a few, elected offices are considered less than full time positions. Whether you are serving on a local school board or city council, having a strong career helps you to be a thoughtful and conscientious public servant.

In 2008, I had the opportunity to start working at the largest public law firm in the nation, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. I was most interested in the outstanding trial advocacy training program that it has for new attorneys. After my own training, I started working as a prosecutor in the Metro Branch of the City Attorney's Office. I remember my first trial like it was yesterday. In this one trial, I channeled all the training and life experiences I'd had to help the jurors understand the facts of the case and find the defendant guilty. While I learned about the law in school, it was my life experiences that enabled me relay the information to twelve jurors.

Having a strong career is not a prerequisite to elected office, but it certainly helps. As a prosecutor, I learned how to gather evidence and marshal arguments in favor of a conclusion. These skills are transferrable to elected office. As lawyers, we have a duty and obligation to make the legal system work and participate in the orderly processes of government. Whether you choose to run for office, endorse someone running for office, or voice support or opposition for initiatives, we have an obligation to use our legal training to perfect our legal and governmental systems.

After having served eight years as a Trustee of the Rio Hondo Community College District, I was presented with the opportunity to continue serving my community as Mayor. In 2009, during the Great Recession, the City of El Monte closed a fire station and let go of one-fourth of its workforce. The City was in a serious fiscal crisis from many decisions made long before the repercussions were being felt. Over the last eight years, I have endeavored to build trust with residents, and show them that their government can develop and execute plans to turn around the future prospects of our community.

No one person can govern without the support of the people. Over the last eight years, the voters have entrusted me to serve them faithfully. Governing is not easy, especially given the political divisions that often erupt in any organization. Although there have been many challenges over the last few years, the City Council and Staff have been able to do a few key things that have improved the future trajectory of the City: build back unrestricted financial reserves, adopt an amended general plan, keep crime down below 2008 levels, and adopt and implement an economic development plan to keep our economy growing and sustain services in our community. Serving as the Mayor has been a privilege and an honor and I hope many of you choose to dedicate a portion of your lives to serve others in this way.

II. STUDENT NARRATIVES

The following narratives by a student and a recent graduate highlight ways to pursue coursework, extracurricular activities, and summer positions to prepare for a career in government work.

NISHA PAREKH '17

I graduated from UCLA School of Law in 2017 and am proud now to work for the United States Department of Labor in the Office of the Solicitor. As a Department of Labor trial attorney, my role is to represent the United States government as the party seeking remedy for workplace violations.

My job consists almost entirely of civil litigation. On any given day, I might be drafting and filing a complaint, preparing written discovery requests, preparing a case file for production to opposing counsel, researching substantive law or procedural issues, negotiating with an opposing party, conferencing with a judge, drafting a settlement proposal, deposing witnesses, or going to trial.

My job reminds me daily of what government for and by the people can look like. In response to severe worker exploitation during the Great Depression, Congress passed legislation to end child labor, create a minimum wage and a forty-hour workweek, protect worker pensions, and minimize workplace death and injury through workplace safety laws. Worker protest and mobilization has since strengthened these protection laws such that today, the federal government appropriates tax dollars to pay for attorneys like me to enforce federal employment law on behalf of America's workers.

My job gives me hope for the future. My job is evidence that government can work for vulnerable people. My job is also evidence that the federal government has room for traditionally marginalized people. I am a queer woman of color immigrant from South Africa and a first generation attorney. Throughout my life, I have faced an onslaught of stereotyping, harassment, and discriminatory treatment—the direct result of the United States' history of racial segregation and violence against women, racial minorities, immigrants, and queer people.

My inclusion in the federal government gives me hope that the great web of intersectional diversity that is the United States can become accepted as the national strength and treasure it is. My inclusion gives me hope that even the most elite corridors of power in the United States can one day reflect the great diversity that is the people the United States.

When I started at UCLA Law, I knew I wanted to do government work but thought I did not want to do litigation. I had done policy advocacy prior to law school and came to law school to be a policymaker. Once in law school, however, I came to love civil litigation as much as policy and simultaneously explored both interests. I interned for the government at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and for private plaintiff's employment law and civil rights firms. I took classes relevant to public administration, trial litigation, and employment law, such as *Administrative Law*, *Federal Courts*, *Civil Rights*, *Employment Discrimination*, and *Trial Advocacy*. I also served as co-editor-in-chief of the *National Black Law Journal*, participated in student government, served on student org boards and the Dean Student Advisory Committee. I also completed a dual master's in public policy at UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs.

Not only did these experiences teach me relevant substantive law and expose me to civil litigation practice, they also helped me better understand legal, constitutional, and political issues related to government agencies. My journal experience strengthened my editing and Bluebooking skills and showed employers I was a strong enough writer to run a journal. Students interested in government litigation work might also consider joining a mock trial team.

I interviewed for my current position at the Solicitor's Office at fall OCI. I mention this because many students interested in public interest employment do not realize that fall OCI has many public interest employment opportunities. To prepare for my interview with the Solicitor's Office, I scheduled a mock interview with career services. I reached out to faculty and to recent alumni working at federal agencies and asked for their advice. I carefully studied the Solicitor's Office website. I also got to my interview early and made sure that I meditated and took a moment to ground myself and feel confident before interviewing, so I could present my best self. I was offered a second interview, used this same strategy, and was offered a position in the attorney Honor's Program.

I conclude by noting that although I am proud to represent the United States, my passion is first for the community I advocate for—workers. Students seeking post-graduate placement at a government agency should identify an agency that regulates an issue they care about and then should take every effort in law school to engage with that issue. While experience interning for a government agency is relevant, a government employer will most likely prioritize hiring students with demonstrated commitment to the issues regulated by the employer's agency. At minimum, applicants for government positions should be able to demonstrate a clear commitment to pursuing a career in public service.

DANIELLE GIES '18

I decided to go to law school after working with a non-profit organization in Minneapolis whose entire staff comprised of lawyers. Having only known lawyers to be as they are represented on television, the experience opened my eyes to the public interest lawyer. I was motivated to be an immigration attorney because my father is an immigrant who took thirty-two years to naturalize after his attorney misled him and withheld information about his case. I chose UCLA School of Law due to its strong immigration law curriculum, faculty support, clinical and experiential offerings, and connections to organizations in the community. I have not been disappointed—and the immigration-related opportunities at UCLA Law have only grown since I was a 1L.

Truthfully, I never expected to work for the government. However, at the February Public Interest Career Day during my 1L year, I met with representatives from the Adelanto and Los Angeles Immigration Courts. I figured that the best way to know what Immigration Judges were looking for from respondents' (or detained individuals') counsel would be to clerk for them.

That summer, I chose the Adelanto Immigration Court, located about two-and-a-half hours northeast of Los Angeles in the high desert. Each Immigration Court is part of the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice. The Adelanto Court is attached to the Adelanto Detention Facility, a privately-run immigration detention facility—slated to be the largest in the country. Working with detained immigrants presents unique challenges for all parties. From the Court's perspective, respondents could always be counted on to appear for court, but they were frequently unrepresented by counsel and often needed more guidance to understand

the nature of the proceedings. Deadlines were tighter because the respondent was being detained at government expense.

I was the first summer intern at that Court and I took assignments from three Immigration Judges. Due to the fast-paced nature and overwhelming volume of detained work, I learned on the fly. The work for judges on a detained docket mostly involves decisions on custody hearings, fear-based claims, proceedings to determine mental incompetency, and analysis of criminal-immigration issues. Writing for a court is not the predictive or persuasive writing one learns in a 1L writing course. I learned to be thorough but efficient in review of the record, fairly summarize the facts and testimony, and tighten my analysis of legal arguments.

At the Los Angeles Immigration Court during my 2L summer, I received assignments from eight Immigration Judges. The pace of work was slower than in the detained setting. I had more time to revise my work and discuss cases with my supervisors, and the quality of my writing increased rapidly as a result. I also had the opportunity to interact with the judges and learn their perspectives on the law, careers, and good (and bad) lawyering.

I will clerk for the Los Angeles Immigration Court for two years after I graduate as part of the Department of Justice Honors Program. I don't believe I have exhausted all the lessons that clerking for the Immigration Court can teach me. This time, I will have had the experience of appearing in front of the Immigration Judge as a law student representative of a detained immigrant.

I do think that a government career should be balanced with outside experience. At UCLA Law, I'm an Executive Director of Law Students for Immigrant Justice and Co-Chair of the El Centro Legal Naturalization Clinic. I have been a member of the Immigrants' Rights Policy Clinic and completed an Independent Project on the effect of private bills and gubernatorial pardons for immigration relief. These experiences, and that of representing a client before the Court, will undoubtedly shape my return to the Immigration Court.

III. CAREERS IN FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At each level of government—federal, state, and local—attorneys advise government officials and help implement government policies. This part highlights some of the legal employment opportunities available within each system of government. Students interested in legal policy work in government should also consider opportunities beyond those described here. Many current government attorneys consulted during the writing of this Guide stressed that policy positions in government can give students crucial experience in a specific sector for which legal degrees are highly valued.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

With opportunities in executive departments, administrative agencies, legislative offices, and courts, the federal government employs more than 90,000 attorneys. Many federal jobs are located in Washington, D.C. However, there are also field offices throughout the country that employ attorneys in federal positions. Specifically, the federal government employs a vast number of civil

service attorneys in advisory roles to help Executive Departments and Administrative Agencies implement federal legislation. Attorneys also serve in legislative offices as aids to lawmakers, and in federal courts as judicial law clerks.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Located within the Executive Branch of the federal government, the Executive Departments of the United States government are responsible for the enforcement and administration of federal laws. The fifteen Executive Departments include: Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor, State, Interior, Treasury, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs. Each department hires in-house counsel to handle the legal demands of their respective roles. Tasks for in-house counsel include developing regulations, drafting and interpreting legislation, monitoring compliance with laws and regulations, representing the agency in administrative hearings, and working with U.S. Attorneys to represent the agency in litigation. Many Executive Departments hire attorneys through the entry-level Government Honors Programs. For a thorough discussion on how to apply to these programs, see Part VI.

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

In addition to Executive Departments, the federal government contains hundreds of administrative agencies established by Congress to create and implement legislative acts affecting various governmental responsibilities. From managing our country's space program, to protecting the environment, to regulating communications, federal administrative agencies develop specialized knowledge to carry out specific assignments or sets of goals. These agencies include the Equal Protection Agency, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Securities and Exchange Commission, to name a few. Similar to the Executive Departments, many Administrative Agencies hire entry-level attorneys as in-house counsel through the Government Honors Programs run by each agency.

LEGISLATIVE OFFICES

Legislative Offices hire attorneys to work as aids on the staffs of individual senators and representatives, on legislative committees, and in administrative offices such as the Congressional Research Service. To assist in the legislative process, attorneys may draft and review legislation, research matters related to the individual committees, and counsel legislators on hearings. Each legislative office or committee has a separate hiring process. As a result, networking to learn more about these positions can prove highly effective. To help establish a robust professional network, students looking for post-grad employment in this area should consider interning or externing with the office in which they are interested.

COURTS

The courts employ attorneys to fill roles such as judicial law clerk, research attorney, or court administrator. For recent graduates, federal judicial clerkship programs provide the most common path to working in federal courts. Clerkships enable new lawyers to hone their legal research and writing skills under the guidance of federal judges. Discussed in Part IV of the Guide, UCLA School of Law Office of Career Services offers individualized support for clerkship candidates as they maneuver the rigorous application process.

STATE GOVERNMENT

Legal opportunities in state governments are generally analogous to those offered in the federal system. State government attorneys work in executive agencies, administrative agencies, legislative offices, and courts. In California, the state's largest legal employer is the California Attorney General's Office. Entry-level positions with this office are available through the California Attorney General Honors Program discussed in Part VI.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Just like in state and federal government, city and local governments often have municipal legal departments with city attorneys who provide legal advice to the city leaders, boards, and agencies, and represent the city in litigation and in other transactions. Depending on the size of the city, these departments vary enormously in size and structure. The Los Angeles City Attorney, for example, has over twenty units, such as, the Environmental Justice and Protection Unit, Gun Violence Protection Unit, and Wage Theft Unit.

IV. PREPARING FOR A CAREER IN GOVERNMENT

UCLA School of Law offers a wide array of support for students as they prepare for a career in government. This part focuses on the specialized resources available at UCLA Law, as well as recommended coursework and internship and externship opportunities to help students present a demonstrated commitment to government service.

CAREER SERVICES RESOURCES

Students interested in government work should take advantage of the Office of Career Services (OCS) and the Office of Public Interest Programs (OPIP) at UCLA School of Law. Both offices staff J.D. counselors with whom students can discuss their summer and employment goals and OPIP has a career counselor that focuses on government employment. Students interested in judicial clerkships should consult with OCS' clerkship counselor for guidance through the rigorous application process.

For tips on developing a resume for government employment, we strongly recommend that you consult OPIP's *Public Interest Resume Guide*, available online: <https://law.ucla.edu/~media/Assets/Office%20of%20Public%20Interest%20Programs/Documents/UCLA%20Law%20Public%20Interest%20Resume%20Guide.ashx>.

OCS provides various print and online resources for students to find opportunities in government. OCS maintains the Symplicity website at law-ucla-csm.symplicity.com/students/. On Symplicity, students can read the reviews written by former students of their experiences while interning at various government agencies. The reviews can be found under the "Summer Employment Evaluation" shortcut on the right side of the main screen. Additionally, every year, OCS publishes a list of students who have agreed to discuss their summer experiences in government agencies. This list is accessible through the Career Services page on MyLaw.

Students can access additional information through the “Career Services” tab under “Departments” on MyLaw. Here, under “Public Service Career Paths/Sectors,” the Office of Career Services provides guides on government jobs, information about various practice areas, and federal, state, and local resources. Finally, OCS has also developed Practice Area Listservs, including for Public Interest Law, to provide advanced students with relevant streamlined job opportunities, career resources and tools, and networking events. OCS emails 2Ls and 3Ls with instructions about how to opt into the listservs.

COURSEWORK

Upper division students have a considerable amount of flexibility in choosing courses that demonstrate a commitment to government service. To assist in selecting relevant coursework for government careers, UCLA School of Law has created several comprehensive curriculum guides related to government practice. These are available at curriculum.law.ucla.edu. Students are especially encouraged to take *Administrative Law*, which focuses on the source of law for agency action while examining the large, powerful role agencies play in governance.

There are many seminars, doctrinal, and experiential courses related to government. Topical courses include *Legislation and Regulation*, *Local Government*, *State and Local Taxation*, and *Statutory Interpretation*. Students should also contemplate courses that will help them decide whether to pursue a career in litigation or transactional work, as there are opportunities for both in government. Of course, students interested in a particular field—Immigration, Education, Securities, for example—should seek out substantive courses that will further their knowledge of these subjects.

Experiential courses provide students with the opportunity to develop practical skills outside of the classroom. For example, the *Community Economic Development Clinic* places students in the role of attorneys in this field by working directly with local community development corporations to integrate aspects of corporate finance, social policy, infrastructure development, and community organizing to bring about economic change.

EXTERNSHIPS

In addition to doctrinal courses and clinics, externships during the semester allow additional ways for students to explore different types of government agencies. UCLA School of Law has an extensive, well-established, and diversified externship program, providing credit for either full-time or part-time placements. Students can pursue opportunities in Los Angeles or spend a semester in another city. To find out more about the Externship Program, stop by their office or visit their website at: <https://law.ucla.edu/academics/clinical-and-experiential-programs/externships/overview/>.

Uniquely, UCLA School of Law allows students to participate in the UCDC Law Program in Washington D.C. During this fourteen-week externship, students work full-time at a government agency. Additionally, students participate in a weekly seminar focused on the theory and practice of federal lawyering and how federal statutes, regulations, and policies are made, changed, and understood. Throughout the externship, students have contact with all three branches of government. Students in the program receive ten units for the field placement portion and three units for a companion seminar. Interested students should look for emails from the UCLA Law Externship Program, which hosts information sessions on the program every semester. To apply,

students must submit a UCDC Law application, resume, unofficial transcript, and brief statement of interest.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Volunteering with an El Centro Legal Clinic at UCLA School of Law can be an excellent way to demonstrate one's interest in and commitment to a specific area of law. El Centro is a student-run program that provides students the opportunity to volunteer with various legal aid clinics across Los Angeles starting in the fall of 1L year. These student-run volunteer clinics allow students to work with clients, develop written and oral advocacy skills, and give back to their communities. Government agencies have been known to ask students about their involvement in such clinics during interviews. Examples of clinics include the Veterans Clinic, Workers Rights Project, Landlord-Tenant Clinic, and the Immigration Clinic.

V. FINDING GOVERNMENT CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

This part provides some common ways to learn about the hundreds of job and internship opportunities available across each level of government, as well as strategies to obtain summer and post-graduate government employment. It details information specific to 1L & 2L Summer Internships and the 3L Job Search. Career fairs, some of which occur on-campus, generally provide important opportunities to find out about government career paths. Additionally, there are several online resources that aggregate job postings across the country.

1L & 2L SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

During 1L and 2L summers, students should focus on applying to offices that practice the type of government lawyering they are interested in pursuing. When making this determination, it is important to consider the level of government in which you would like to practice, the type of government agency, and its role in creating and upholding the law. This is an essential first step in creating a personal network of professionals who can provide guidance and connections when you are applying for a competitive permanent position in a government office.

One of the first things 1L students should do upon arriving at UCLA School of Law is meet with their Attorney Advisors. To find out who your Attorney Advisor is, stop by the Career Services Office at 77 Dodd Hall (next building to the law school, bottom floor) or call 310-206-1117. The Attorney Advisor can assist with important preliminary steps, including finalizing one's resume. Students should also contact the Office of Public Interest Programs (OPIP), which serves as UCLA School of Law's principal information center for public interest law opportunities. OPIP provides information, resources, and advising on careers in government.

In choosing a summer internship, students should take advantage of the other OCS resources, discussed in Part IV. Notable 1L and 2L summer government internship sites have included the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, the California Attorney General's Office, the California Coastal Commission, the Department of Justice, the Federal Communications Commission, and many more.

3L JOB SEARCH

Rising 3Ls interested in careers in government should begin their job search in the summer before their 3L year, as many applications open at this time with deadlines as early as September. In early summer, students should begin regularly checking government agency websites for hiring instructions, as well as USAjobs.gov and the Arizona Guide, discussed later in this part, for postings announcing Government Honors Program opportunities. Through the course of the job search, students should dedicate time to expanding their professional network. In the competitive government job market, securing a position often depends on personal contacts passing an application along to individuals responsible for making hiring decisions.

3Ls should also become familiar with the security clearance process for government jobs at each level of government. Depending on the agency, many require some degree of a background check. Clearance issues may include past drug use, prior arrests and convictions, defaulted student loans, or failure to comply with federal laws such as intellectual property and tax laws.

For California State hiring, 3Ls must register for the Graduate Legal Assistant or Deputy Attorney General exam online. Completion of the exam is required to be considered for employment in state government agencies and placed on the hiring list. The exam is similar to an employment application and determines placement on the hiring list. For additional information on obtaining post-graduate employment in California state government, see Part VI.

CAREER FAIRS

Career fairs serve as an essential opportunity for students to learn about agencies at each level of government. Many of the career fairs that feature government employers provide interview opportunities for both summer internship and post-graduate positions. Notably, such fairs give students the opportunity to meet and network with current attorneys working in government, many of whom are UCLA alumni. In this section, the various career fairs are discussed in chronological order, starting with those occurring at the beginning of the academic school year.

UCLA ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS (OCI)

UCLA hosts OCI, a program where organizations from across the country interview 2Ls for summer internship opportunities and 3Ls for entry-level positions. OCI consists of two sessions, “Early Interview Week” in late July/early August, and a “Fall Interview Program” in September. Several government agencies typically participate and conduct on-campus interviews at these times. Past participants have included various public defender and district attorney offices as well as other government agencies such as the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Comptroller of the Currency. Students interested in participating should keep an eye out for emails from OCS over the summer.

UCLA GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INTEREST INFORMATION FAIR

Every fall the UCLA School of Law hosts a meet-and-greet with representatives from over sixty government and public interest organizations. This is an opportunity for 1Ls, 2Ls, and 3Ls to network with and receive information from government agencies at each level of government. Many organizations also accept resumes from 2Ls and 3Ls for internship and entry-level job opportunities. Participating organizations have included: California Department of Fair

Employment and Housing, California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, Los Angeles City Attorney, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and many more.

EQUAL JUSTICE WORKS CONFERENCE & CAREER FAIR

The Equal Justice Works Conference (EJW) & Career Fair in Washington, D.C. is typically held at the end of October with registration for attendance and interview bids closing in early September. EJW is the largest national public interest legal career fair in the country. Employers conduct interviews for internships and full-time jobs, as well as meet with students in informal “table talk” discussions regarding public interest job opportunities. Additionally, there are workshops on public interest career fairs, networking opportunities, resume review, mock interviews, and panel discussions. With the concentration of federal offices in Washington D.C., many federal agencies bring representatives to the fair, including Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s Office of General Counsel, the Department of Justice, the Administrative Office of the Courts/Federal Judiciary, and many more.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC INTEREST/PUBLIC SECTOR CAREER DAY

Every February, the Office of Public Interest Programs (OPIP) hosts the Annual Southern California Public Interest/Public Sector Career Day at UCLA School of Law. This Public Interest Career Day is comprised of prescheduled, formal interviews for summer and postgraduate positions as well as informal “table-talk” with representatives of the participating organizations, agencies, and firms. Additionally, there are a series of informal lunchtime discussions on different substantive areas of public interest practice and on issues related to the public interest job search, such as postgraduate fellowships and the DOJ Honors Program. Public Interest Career Day also sponsors panel discussions that may be of interest to those seeking government careers.

As the preeminent Career Fair in California for public sector opportunities, the all-day event attracts government agencies from across the country, including California Department of Business Oversight, California Public Utilities Commission, Internal Revenue Service, Los Angeles County Counsel’s Office, Sacramento County Office of the Public Defender, U.S. Department of Justice’s Environment and Natural Resources Division, to name a few.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Throughout the job search, students should regularly consult the Government Honors and Internship Handbook prepared by The Arizona University James E. Rogers College of Law (Arizona Guide), available at arizonahandbooks.com/u/UCLALaw (password: UCLALaw2015; username: UCLALaw). The online publication is continually updated with internship and post-graduate honors programs in federal, state, and local government departments.

Additionally, the Public Service Jobs Directory, available at PSJD.org/Public_Sector_Career_Paths, aggregates resources for lawyers seeking jobs at every level of government. In addition to posting job and internship opportunities, the website contains information on pursuing legal opportunities at the federal, state, and local level.

On the federal level, USAJobs.gov contains a comprehensive list of all federal job opportunities searchable by location and keyword. The keyword search allows users to narrow opportunities specifically for attorneys.

Similar to the comprehensive list provided by the federal government, the California Personnel Board website, spb.ca.gov, contains a complete list of California state offices that hire attorneys. Its accompanying website calcareers.ca.gov/ lists any open job opportunities. These websites also provide complete information on the civil service exams required to qualify for employment opportunities with California state agencies, discussed further in Part VI.

Finally, on the local level, most city attorney's offices post job openings on their websites. For example, Los Angeles City Attorney's Office maintains a "Careers" section of its website where it lists current opportunities, available at lacityattorney.org/careers. The website governmentjobs.com can be a good starting point for students interested at exploring the legal opportunities available in cities and counties across the country.

VI. ENTRY-LEVEL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

This part discusses popular entry-level and post-graduate government employment opportunities at the federal, state, and local levels. Each level of government has specific opportunities available to recent graduates, though students should be advised that many agencies seek attorneys with more experience. For this reason, Honors Programs at both the federal and state levels can be the ideal way for students to secure post-graduate employment. Additionally, many fellowships exist at all levels of government, sponsored both by the government directly and by non-profits. Interested students should be aware that the application process for many of these opportunities begins the summer before their 3L year.

"Students seeking post-graduate placement at a government agency should identify an agency that regulates an issue they care about and then should take every effort in law school to engage with that issue."

- Nisha Parekh, Trial Attorney, United States Department of Labor, UCLA School of Law Class of 2017

FEDERAL OPPORTUNITIES

Federal job opportunities are available in more than fifty executive branch agencies. The Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Labor, and the Securities and Exchange Commission are but a few examples of federal agencies that employ a significant number of attorney in their respective General or Chief's Counsel's Offices. These attorneys are tasked with enforcing an agency's regulations and policies.

The federal government also employs in-house counsel in most of its executive branch agencies. These roles tend to be focused less on litigation, with lawyers offering legal opinions and input on the agency's substantive programs, drafting regulations, and representing the agency in administrative proceedings. Certain agencies also employ attorneys in their respective Inspector General's Office. These attorneys are responsible for investigating allegations of waste and corruption within the agency.

Most agencies prefer to hire attorneys with several years of experience. Accordingly, the Government Honors Program is the main way through which new law school graduates can secure legal positions in these agencies. There are Honors Programs across a diverse array of federal Departments. Still, students should regularly check the Arizona Guide, USAjobs.gov, and PSJD.org/Public_Sector_Career_Paths, all of which are discussed in Part V of this Guide, for

listed entry-level opportunities. Additionally, students should explore the Presidential Management Fellows Program and Recent Graduates Program discussed in the Fellowships section of this part.

In addition to opportunities in the federal executive branch, Senators and House members on Capitol Hill often employ attorneys both on their individual staffs and on congressional committees. Attorneys working on a Congressman's staff may be involved in advising him or her, preparing him or her for hearings, and interacting with constituents. Attorneys working on congressional committees may be involved in drafting and reviewing proposed legislation. Each office and committee conducts its own hiring. Previous related legal experience—preferably on Capitol Hill, in a legislature, or on a campaign—is typically required for permanent positions. In addition to looking at individual Congressmen's websites for opportunities, students should check OPAjobs.com, HillZoo.com, and Senate and House Employment Bulletins.

THE GOVERNMENT HONORS PROGRAMS

Each year, hundreds of new attorneys are hired in the federal government through Government Honors Programs. Programs typically require a one- to three-year commitment, after which some participants are hired in permanent positions. Most Honors Programs consider a variety of qualifications when reviewing applications, however, most typically they examine: 1) law school Grade Point Average, with some programs requiring a minimum GPA; 2) law school activities, such as law journals, moot court, and clinical experience; 3) skills, including oral, written, and analytical skills; and 4) experience, including relevant summer experience and law school clinics.

In July before 3L year, interested students should begin checking the Arizona Guide for comprehensive updates on Honors Program application information at the federal, state, and local levels. The applications for many of these programs open in the summer with applications due in September. It is advantageous to apply early as some agencies conduct interviews and make hiring decisions on a rolling basis.

Typically the largest and most competitive Government Honors Program is the U.S. Department of Justice Attorney General's Honors Program. Participating DOJ organizations have included: the Antitrust, Civil, Civil Rights, Criminal, Environment and Natural Resources, and Tax Divisions; the Federal Bureau of Prisons; the Executive Office for the Immigration Review; the U.S. Trustees' Office; and select U.S. Attorney's Offices. For more information on the program and application, visit justice.gov/legal-careers/entry-level-attorneys. Other popular Government Honors Programs include the Environmental Protection Agency, the Housing and Urban Development Program, and the Department of State. Applications for these programs generally open in mid-summer with application deadlines in July–October.

It is important to note that hiring freezes and federal budgetary cuts will affect the size and availability of entry-level federal positions through the Honors Programs. This is highly dependent on the scope and length of any federal hiring freeze. Programs should make applicants aware of these potential issues when applications become available.

STATE GOVERNMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Similar to the opportunities available on the federal level, states employ attorneys in various departments and agencies. Students seeking jobs in state government should consult the materials

available on the Career Services page on MyLaw, which contain a sampling of state agencies that employ attorneys.

Students interested in California state government should consult information available at OCS on California's civil service system, which requires applicants to take specific tests to qualify for a list from which specific agencies fill positions. Interested students can search for California entry-level job postings at calcareers.ca.gov. Students should be sure to check the Class Specification for a position before applying to ensure that it is at the appropriate level.

While this Guide highlights the California Office of the Attorney General since it employs a significant number of graduates, students should be aware that opportunities exist across multiple agencies in California. In addition, most states have similar Honors programs for hiring entry-level government attorneys. Students should conduct independent research on opportunities available government agencies in the state in which they are interested.

CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

California's Office of the Attorney General represents the State of California in both civil and criminal matters at both the trial and appellate levels of California and the United States. In addition, the Attorney General provides legal counsel to state officers and many state agencies, boards, and commissions. Although the Attorney General typically hires attorneys with significant experience, in recent years there has been some entry-level hiring of new attorneys. Interested students must begin their job search by taking the Deputy Attorney General Examination, which is actually more of a questionnaire, and getting on the hiring list. New graduates should be aware that applicants who are not yet members of the California State Bar will be permitted to take the exam but will not be considered eligible for appointment until they are admitted to practice. For a complete description of the application process, students should consult the *Getting a State Job* and *Careers* sections of the California Office of the Attorney General website.

CALIFORNIA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S HONORS PROGRAM

Entry-level positions for students coming directly out of law school seeking jobs in California state government are available through the California Attorney General's Honors Program. The Attorney General's Honors Program is a highly competitive, two-year program for recent law school graduates and newly admitted lawyers. Honors attorneys have the opportunity to work with experts employed by the Attorney General's Office in a wide variety of legal subject areas including but not limited to consumer, antitrust, environment, business, tax, criminal, and civil rights. Participants gain courtroom experience, as well as draft motions and pleadings for submission to the court. Placements are allocated across three divisions—Civil, Criminal, and Public Rights—and depend on the staffing needs of the office. Typically, participants will be based in Sacramento. Further information about the program may be found at oag.ca.gov/careers/honors/introduction.

POST-BAR GOVERNMENT CLERKSHIPS

While awaiting bar results, students can work in Graduate Legal Assistant (GLA) positions. These positions provide an opportunity for students to work for state agencies with the possibility of securing long-term legal careers in state service. The paid, twelve-month position gives recent law graduates who are not yet barred an introduction to legal work in the state practice. There is no guarantee this will lead to a full-time position, however if students perform well and a position

becomes available, a permanent staff attorney position can be offered once the participant passes the bar. In this role, GLAs work under the supervision of attorneys assisting in legal research and preparation for other legal matters. Work includes preparing drafts of resolutions and legislative matters; compiling, annotating, and indexing provisions of law and legislative measures; and assisting in answering court calendars.

Before seeking GLA positions, students must submit a complete application. The application includes the Graduate Legal Assistant Examination, which is actually more of a detailed questionnaire. These examinations are scored. If a student receives a high score, he or she is placed on an eligible list for GLA positions. Hires are made from this list. Students should submit applications early, as it takes some time for the exam to be scored, and students cannot apply to jobs until they receive an exam score. Links to all of the necessary documents and instructions can be found at oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/careers/bulletins/cnt_grad_leg_asst.pdf.

One example of a GLA position is the California Department of Fair Employment & Housing (DFEH) Civil Rights Honors Program. Civil Rights Fellows assist DFEH attorneys in investigating, mediating, and prosecuting claims of unlawful discrimination and hate violence in employment, housing and public accommodations. Fellows are placed in either the Los Angeles or Elk Grove DFEH office. Applications are typically due in early March before graduation. For more information, visit dfeh.ca.gov/jobs/.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Students seeking positions in local government should research the localities in which they are interested in working. Counties and municipalities typically have websites detailing their departments and agencies, and the opportunities available therein. Students should consult the *2017 State and Local Government Fellowship Guide* available on the Career Services page on MyLaw for a sampling of the various opportunities available across the country. Several of the local fellowships available to recent graduates are discussed under Fellowship Opportunities later in this part.

One of the main ways to work in local government is at a City Attorney's or City Law Office. Attorneys work in myriad criminal and civil divisions dealing with labor, housing, environmental, and employment issues, to name just a few. Students should check the City Attorney websites of their chosen cities to find opportunities. Not all offices hire new graduates, but some major cities such as New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia have entry-level positions available.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Fellowships provide students the opportunity to work for a government agency or non-profit engaging in government work. Fellowships tend to last for a set amount of time, typically one to three years. They give recent graduates valuable experience with government work, along with the opportunity to make connections with various agencies.

PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS PROGRAM

The United States Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program is a highly competitive, flagship leadership development program for advanced degree candidates. Sponsored by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the PMF Program is available to individuals who obtained an

advanced degree (including law degrees) within the preceding two years of applying. The two-year fellowship provides training on leadership, management, policy, and other topics as well as at least one placement in a federal agency. Fellows do not engage in litigation, but may rotate through an agency's General Counsel's Office. At the end of the two-year program, fellows are reviewed and the position may be converted into a permanent position. For more information on how to apply, visit PMF.gov and USAJobs.gov. Opportunities are usually available in the late summer or early fall for the following year.

"The PMF program allowed me to work in a great agency that I never otherwise considered while exploring terrific opportunities in other offices and agencies."

- Bryan Lee, Attorney, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Justice, UCLA School of Law Class of 2013

RECENT GRADUATES PROGRAM

Like the Presidential Management Fellows Program, the Recent Graduates Program is offered through the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and is similarly available to individuals who received a qualifying degree (including bachelor's degrees) within the preceding two years of applying. Successful applicants are placed in a dynamic, developmental program with the potential to lead to a civil service career in the federal government. The program lasts for one year. For more information on how to apply, visit OPM.gov.

CAPITAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Capital Fellows Program, housed at Sacramento State's Center for California Studies, consists of four individual programs: the Jessie Marvin Unruh Assembly Fellowship Program, the Executive Fellowship Program, the California Senate Fellows Program, and the Judicial Fellowship Program. Each program places students in either the California legislative, executive, or judicial branch, and requires a separate application. Fellows are matched to placements that best utilize their education and skills. Although a legal-related work assignment is not guaranteed, law school graduates have put their legal training to use in each of the four programs. Fellows receive a monthly stipend, benefits, loan deferments, and graduate units from Sacramento State in Government or Public Policy. Finalists are interviewed, in-person, in Sacramento and Los Angeles beginning in April and early May before graduation. Hiring decisions are made in May.

Executive Fellows are placed in one of the executive offices of California's Executive Branch. Under the guidance of an individual mentor, Fellows serve as full-time professional staff in these agencies and meet weekly for graduate seminars in Public Policy and Administration. Through the program, Fellows gain experience in project management, public administration, legislation, and much more.

Senate Fellows are placed in an individual Senate member's or policy committee office as part of the public policy staff. Those working with Senate members assist in researching and drafting bills, deal with constituent services, and help develop policy proposals. Those working on policy committees develop expertise regarding the subject matter jurisdiction of their committees, complete research assignments, and assist Committee Chairs as needed. Fellows also participate in weekly academic seminars at the Capital.

Assembly Fellows are placed in an individual Assembly Member's office in Sacramento to serve as a Legislative Aide or as a Committee Consultant for a policy or fiscal committee. Fellows

perform a variety of tasks, which include facilitating bills through the legislative process, advising the Member on policy issues, and preparing speeches and press releases.

Placed in Superior Courts across the state, Judicial Fellows work with court administrators at all levels of the state judicial system on the management and development of court programs, budgets, and policy. For more information about the programs and how to apply, visit csus.edu/calst/programs/.

CORO FELLOWSHIP

The Coro Fellowship is located in Los Angeles, New York, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and St. Louis. Throughout nine months, the twelve Fellows participate in a series of full-time projects across a variety of sectors in public affairs. Sectors may include government, business, electoral politics, organized labor, media, and non-profit/philanthropy. Elected officials, staffers, department heads, executive directors, and CEOs provide the knowledge and perspective to help Fellows assess how organizations accomplish tasks in the social, political, and economic spheres. Participating government agencies include City of Pittsburgh Emergency Management, City of St. Louis Mayor's Office, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, Office of the Bronx Borough President, and the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. Typically, the application deadline is in January and Fellows begin the program in September. For more information visit, corofellowship.org.

PUBLIC RIGHTS PROJECT FELLOWSHIP

The Public Rights Project Fellowship is a two-year opportunity for attorneys who have three to five years of practice experience. It is hosted by the Public Rights Project, a non-profit dedicated to helping state and local public law offices increase enforcement of civil rights, consumer protection, and environmental laws. Fellows are placed in a City Attorney's Office, District Attorney's Office, or Attorney's General's Office, where they engage in litigation, coalition building and community engagement, policy research, and other enforcement projects. Geographic locations vary depending on the application year. Fellows receive a yearly stipend of \$60,000-\$80,000. For more information, visit publicrightsproject.org/fellowship2.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPACT LITIGATION FELLOWSHIP

The Social Justice and Impact Litigation Section offers a two-year fellowship with the County of Santa Clara's Office of the County Counsel. The fellowship gives recent graduates and judicial clerks an opportunity to assist the department in litigating high-impact cases, draft innovative local ordinances, and develop new policies and programs to advance the County's goal of achieving social and economic justice for its residents and to promote local, state, and national public policy reform. Fellows help shape policy; conduct legal research and analysis; draft pleadings, ordinances, resolutions, and memos; participate in all aspects of ongoing litigation; and help identify and develop new cases and projects. The position typically begins in September, although applications are due a year earlier around August. Hiring decisions are usually made by October. For members of the California Bar, the starting salary is approximately \$100,000 per year. For additional information on this opportunity, visit sccgov.org/sites/cco/opportunities/pages/fellowship.aspx.

WOMEN’S LAW AND PUBLIC POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program (WLPPFP) is a yearlong fellowship offered to law school graduates and people in their final year of law school. Hosted by Georgetown University Law Center, the WLPPFP provides an opportunity for public interest attorneys to work on women’s issues in Washington D.C. Throughout the fellowship year, participants gain invaluable experience working in public interest organizations or government agencies on a vast array of topics promoting women’s rights. Participants work directly with leaders in the legal community while gaining advocacy skills through in-depth training provided by the program. Typically, applications are due in the fall for placement the following year. For more information on this opportunity, visit law.georgetown.edu/academics/centers-institutes/wlppfp/index.cfm.

NEW YORK CITY SOCIAL JUSTICE POST-GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

The New York City Social Justice Post-Graduate Fellowship (SJPF) is a nine-month fellowship for students interested in public service. Fellows are placed in mayoral and non-mayoral City agencies and offices, or the City Council. Specifically, fellows engage in work designed to foster equity for underserved and under-resourced communities. While the work is legal in nature, fellows can also expect to be involved in policymaking and governance. Fellows receive a stipend of \$46,500. To apply, students must be admitted to the New York State Bar. For more information, visit nyc.gov/html/dcas/html/employees/social_justice.shtml.

SOROS JUSTICE ADVOCACY FELLOWSHIP

The Soros Justice Advocacy Fellowship funds projects related to criminal justice reform in the United States at the local, state, and national levels. Students can design projects involving a wide range of tactics: litigation, public education, coalition-building, grassroots mobilization, and policy-driven research. The project must be related to a broad criminal justice reform goal, for example, reducing the number of people who are under correctional control, eliminating extreme forms of punishment, or promoting fairness, transparency, and accountability in the justice system. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to seek a host organization, which can include government agencies. This fellowship lasts eighteen months. Fellows receive a generous stipend plus project-based expenses, depending on their experience. Applications are typically due in December during 3L year. Fellowships can begin anytime between July and November of the following year. For more information, visit opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/soros-justice-fellowships.

VII. INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Interviews for positions in government vary depending on the agency. Students should be prepared to answer general questions about their law school experience and their interest in government work, as well as more specific questions about their interest in a particular field. This part provides interviewees with a framework for understanding and responding to interview questions. It contains sample questions asked by government agencies in their interview processes. UCLA School of Law students who were consulted about their interview experiences for positions in civil government positions covered in this Guide stressed that most interviews tend to be more conversational than adversarial, although this may not always be the case.

Agencies value fit in an office and with the type of work. Therefore, being yourself and building rapport with the interviewer is important. Students are always recommended to research the agency before the interview, including by talking to other students who have summered at the agency and gone through the interview process.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Be prepared to answer initial questions about yourself and your background. These questions give you a chance to tell the interviewer things about yourself that may not be directly related to the position, but you should take the chance to provide answers that make you a compelling candidate. These questions also give you a chance to build rapport with the interviewers.

- Tell me about your background.
- What are you looking for in a summer internship?
- What are three of your strengths that would make you successful at this internship?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- What kinds of books do you like to read?

QUESTIONS ABOUT WORKING AT THE INTERVIEWING OFFICE

Be prepared to discuss both your interest in government work and your interest in the specific agency. Employers want to know why you are pursuing an opportunity in the public sector over the private one. It is important to demonstrate knowledge about a particular agency, its function, and its goals. Before an interview, be sure to review both the agency's current projects and more generally, current developments in that particular field.

- Why are you interested in government work?
- Why do you want to work at this level (local/state/federal) of government?
- Why do you want to work at a regulatory agency?
- Why do you want to work with [this specific department or division]?
- What do you know about [this specific department or division]?
- Why are you drawn to this issue area?
- Many government agencies have different units or practice areas. In this department, which practice area interests you the most?
- Have you studied [law specific to our department]?
- The internship is unpaid—how do you feel about that?
- You would be the only law clerk—are you comfortable working alone?

ACADEMIC QUESTIONS

Government interviews, especially those for summer internships or externships, tend to focus on your experience in law school. Be prepared to discuss your classes and assignments, especially for the portions of your academic study that are directly relevant to the position.

- Why did you decide to go to law school?
- Do you enjoy law school?
- What has been your favorite class in law school, and why?
- Have you taken any courses related to our area of practice?
- Tell me about the work you are doing in your [El Centro clinic].

- Tell me about your writing sample.
- Tell me about a legal issue you have researched or studied (such as a legal issue in your *Legal Research and Writing* course).

QUESTIONS ABOUT SKILLS, GOALS, AND EXPERIENCE

Just as in any other interview, an employer will want to know about your previous experiences listed on your resume, the skills you have developed that would make you an excellent intern, and your goals after law school. Remember that any public service experience is important and pertinent, as it demonstrates your commitment to working in the public sector. Be prepared to discuss your research and writing skills in particular, as they are highly relevant to any government internship.

- Please describe your most important public service experience?
- What about your background has shaped your interest in working for our office?
- What professional or academic experiences would inform your work in this internship?
- What litigation skills and experience do you have?
- What experience do you have with legal research and/or writing?
- What was your favorite part of your internship last summer?
- What did you do at [Job X on your resume] that made you feel good about yourself?
- In what kind of environment do you thrive?
- I have your resume in front of me, but is there anything that is not apparent on your resume that you would like to share with us? For example, have you overcome any adversity that you would feel comfortable sharing with us?
- What is an urgent civil rights issue that you are interested in working on?
- What are your career goals?
- Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years?
- Do you imagine yourself going into politics?

ETHICAL, PRACTICAL, AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS

During an interview for a government position, you may be asked questions that test your ethics, ability to work with others, or stance on applicable issues in the related field. In particular, be ready to discuss examples from your past experiences.

- If you disagreed with a judge or thought he or she was wrong about the law, what would you do?
- Tell me about a time when you had to confront a manager you disagreed with and how you dealt with it.
- What would you do if you had to work on the opposite side of an issue you cared about?
- Give me an example of a time you had to complete a project with a team.
- What would you predict would be an emerging issue in our agency's legal practice?

CONCLUSION

Federal, state, and local governments provide innumerable opportunities for attorneys to engage in public service across diverse interest areas. Students can gain rich experiences through summer

internships at government agencies and departments and new law graduates can launch their careers in gratifying agency positions and fellowships. Our hope is that through this Guide, law students may become interested in this career path, excited about the multitude of ways one can work in government, and informed as to how UCLA School of Law can support their journey.