



Public Counsel is a nonprofit public interest law firm dedicated to advancing civil rights, racial and economic justice, as well as to amplifying the power of our clients through comprehensive legal advocacy. Founded on and strengthened by a pro bono legal service model, our staff and volunteers seek justice through direct legal services, promote healthy and resilient communities through education and outreach, and support community-led efforts to transform unjust systems through litigation and policy advocacy in and beyond Los Angeles.

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION LAW PROJECT

The Homelessness Prevention Law Project at Public Counsel works to decrease the number of evictions and the displacement of vulnerable communities in Los Angeles County, by keeping individuals and families in stable housing, and supporting recently evicted community members to reenter housing. We achieve this through a community lawyering model that involves a combination of direct legal services, education, and outreach spanning the critical intervention points that occur before, during, and after an eviction. We work collaboratively with other legal services agencies, and non-legal community based organizations, to advance eviction prevention and protection programs throughout LA County. Our summer interns gain hands-on experience in both direct service and outreach.

PREVENTING AND ENDING HOMELESSNESS PROGRAM (PEHP)

This program delivers comprehensive, trauma-informed, wrap-around legal services designed to remove barriers to housing. Public Counsel serves youth, families and single adults in the communities within L.A. County's Service Planning Area (SPA) 6, in partnership with local homeless services programs. We also manage a public benefits advocacy program where we go into LA County's Dept. of Public Social Services (DPSS) offices to provide public benefits advocacy to benefits recipients and individuals/families eligible for benefits, such as General Relief and CalFresh. We remove barriers to housing that require legal intervention, including but not limited to: eviction prevention, landlord dispute resolution, government benefits, and clearing quality-of-life tickets.

What do student interns do in PEHP?

We train students that intern with PEHP to conduct client interviews, identify legal needs and social support services, and analyze legal issues pertaining to the barriers to housing stability stated above. Students may also assist attorneys on cases, conduct legal research, draft memos and legal briefs and provide day-of advocacy in the DPSS offices.

THE SHRIVER HOUSING PROJECT - LOS ANGELES (Shriver)

Shriver is the largest of seven legal projects approved by the California Judicial Council to provide critical legal services to low-income individuals and families who might otherwise not have access to legal assistance or representation. Through this program, Public Counsel takes eviction defense cases for full representation through a centralized intake system at the downtown Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

What do student interns do in Shriver?

We train students who intern with Shriver to interact with clients and learn litigation skills by working alongside our paralegals and attorneys, throughout all stages of an eviction defense case. This might include participating in follow-up phone calls to gather additional information and documentation, drafting court forms and discovery, researching and drafting legal briefs and motions and observing court hearings.

AFFIRMATIVE LITIGATION TEAM (ALT)

ALT is a team that represents Tenants in affirmative lawsuits that we file against unscrupulous landlords for violations of state and local tenants protections, such as harassment and retaliation against tenants who exercise their rights; discrimination of tenants in protected classes; and violations of health and safety protections for tenants through failure to maintain their properties. The ALT team also holds quarterly clinics for tenants in order to identify cases for representation; as well as takes internal and external referrals.

What do student interns do in ALT?

We train students who intern with ALT to conduct or assist with client interviews, and to evaluate and analyze potential legal claims under the array of tenant protections available. To support our litigation, students may have the opportunity to conduct legal research, draft litigation memos or legal briefs, assist with preparing lawsuits for filing and attend a legal clinic.