

**University of Wisconsin Law School
Summer Public Service Fellowships**

2025 FACT SHEET

This Fact Sheet answers many of the questions you may have regarding the Summer Public Service Fellowship (“SPSF”) program at the University of Wisconsin Law School. It also sets forth the program’s guidelines and procedures to which applicants must adhere. Keep this Fact Sheet for reference during the application process and, if an SPSF award is received, during the summer as well. If you have questions not answered here, please contact Lindsay Slaker (lslaker@wisc.edu) in the Office of Career and Professional Development (“OCPD”).

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is a Summer Public Service Fellowship?

The SPSF program provides stipends to University of Wisconsin Law School students who take unpaid or extremely low paid summer public service jobs. The program is intended to help students cover a portion of their basic living expenses while working in an unpaid legal position in public service.

How much money can I expect to receive from an SPSF award?

SPSF awards are not guaranteed. Most students who receive an SPSF award will receive an award between \$2,500 and \$3,500. The award may be below \$2,500 if a student is receiving funding from other sources; however, a student will never be in a worse position than if they had not applied for other funding. We encourage and expect students to seek other sources of funding, so will try to make sure that students who seek such funding receive a total amount from all sources that exceeds what they would have received if they applied to SPSF alone (subject to the \$5,000 total limit noted below).

The amount of the award also may depend on a number of factors, including whether the student will incur additional living or travel expenses because of the summer position. Cost of living in and travel to the city of the student’s internship are the primary factors in determining award amounts, though the Student Awards Committee reserves the right to consider other factors listed herein.

How will I receive my stipend?

After employment confirmation, the award will be disbursed directly to your tuition account. First it will be applied to any outstanding tuition balance, and you will receive the remainder as a refund. The refund will be directly deposited to your bank account if you have enrolled in eRefunds, otherwise the Bursar’s Office will mail you a check to the address listed in your Student Center.

If you have any questions about this, you should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid at (608) 262-3060 or finaid@finaid.wisc.edu. Be prepared to provide your Campus ID number.

Who can apply for an SPSF award?

Any returning, enrolled University of Wisconsin Law School student may apply. This includes current 1Ls, 2Ls, and any joint-degree students who will not have graduated from the Law School prior to December 2025 (i.e., students must still be working toward their degree in the Fall 2025 term).

Students who transfer to another Law School in the fall of 2025 are *excluded* from this program. If you know that you are transferring to another Law School, you are ineligible for an SPSF award. If you have applied to transfer, or intend to do so, in fall 2025, you **must** notify Lindsay Slaker in OCPD as part of your SPSF application. Further, if you receive an SPSF grant and subsequently commit to transfer, you are required to repay the SPSF award in full. Failure to notify OCPD about a potential transfer and/or to notify OCPD about a definite transfer may result in penalties as deemed appropriate by the Law School.

How does enrollment in a clinical/externship program affect my eligibility for an SPSF?

Applicants are not eligible to receive SPSF funding for work for which the applicant will receive academic credit through a summer Law School clinical program or externship program, other summer Law School for-credit academic program, or through the Prosecution and Public Defender Projects.

What are the chances of receiving an SPSF award?

We hope to provide funding for every qualified applicant. In the event we are unable to provide funds to every applicant, the Student Award Committee will consider the following criteria when making awards:

- Completeness of the application;
- Whether the applicant has complied with the Statement of Professional Obligation;
- Applicant's cost of living during the summer;
- Whether the applicant diligently sought other sources of funding;
- Whether the applicant will receive other funding for the summer employment;
- Applicant's year in Law School.

Students are expected to engage professionally in all interactions with employers and abide by the Statement of Professional Obligation, which you signed when entering Law School. This includes not rescinding the acceptance of an offer or continuing to apply for/interview with other organizations after accepting an offer. Failure to comply with the Statement of Professional Obligation may result in reduction or revocation of your SPSF award.

If there are special circumstances you think the Student Awards Committee should consider regarding your application, you may submit a brief explanation with your application.

How does funding from other sources affect SPSF eligibility?

SPSF funds are intended to help fund summer public interest volunteer opportunities. Funding may be decreased or eliminated for candidates who receive outside funding or funding from their employer. However, the Committee will not put you in a worse position than if you had not sought outside funding. Therefore, students are encouraged and expected to seek such funding. If your position is eligible for alternative funding sources, failure to seek such funding may result in the reduction or denial of your award.

If you plan to apply for other funding, you **must** include that information in your application. Further, if you receive other funding to support your position (whether a wage or stipend from the employer, a grant from another organization, or any other funding), you **must** disclose that to OCPD immediately, even if you have already submitted your application. Failure to inform OCPD about any award of outside funding may result in forfeiture of your SPSF award and/or other penalties as deemed appropriate by the Law School.

Total funding from outside sources and SPSF cannot exceed \$5,000 combined. To allocate resources to those most in need, student awards may be reduced even if they have not reached the \$5,000 combined cap, but, as stated above, students will not be put in a worse position than if they had not sought outside funding.

How do I apply?

You apply through submitting the following form: [SPSF Application](#).

What is Federal Work Study and how does that impact my SPSF eligibility?

Federal Work Study (“FWS”) is a need-based, part-time employment program in which the government and the employer share the payroll cost of employing a student. For students, work study is a part of their financial aid award package and is need based. Work study income (although taxable) does **not** affect a student’s future financial aid eligibility and doesn’t need to be reported on their FAFSA as earned income.

UW Law School has entered into a special FWS partnership with some eligible employers who offer summer legal internships. To seek FWS, both an employer and the student need to be eligible. For summer 2025, the organizations that the Law School has partnered with, who therefore can offer FWS to eligible students, are: Community Justice Inc., Gathering Waters, Legal Action of Wisconsin (excluding the Farmworker Program), Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee, Wisconsin Department of Justice, Wisconsin Department of Revenue, and Wisconsin Judicare.

Student eligibility is determined by the FAFSA. Students apply for FWS using the same [SPSF Application](#) form. By opting in for FWS consideration, students give permission to the Office of Student Financial Aid to access their account.

All eligible students employed by partner employers for summer 2025 will receive \$5,000 throughout the course of the summer, distributed in biweekly paychecks. In accepting FWS, a student is not eligible for any additional SPSF funds, since they will have attained the capped amount of \$5,000.

All other SPSF requirements apply to students accepting FWS in lieu of SPSF. Please see the job eligibility requirements laid out below.

JOB ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for consideration for an SPSF award, a job must be:

- With a non-profit organization or a government agency that complies with the UW Law School nondiscrimination policy (<https://law.wisc.edu/career/employers.html>) and applicable local, state, and federal nondiscrimination laws;
- Legal in nature;
- One which allows the student to work a minimum of 10 weeks AND a total of at least 400 hours over the summer (375 if the employer has a 37.5 hour work week); and
- One which provides supervision from a licensed attorney.

Applicants will not receive any SPSF funding for work for which the applicant will receive academic credit through a summer Law School clinical program or externship program, other summer Law School for-credit academic program, or through the Prosecution and Public Defender Projects.

If you have any questions about the criteria, please contact Lindsay Slaker (lslaker@wisc.edu) in OCPD.

What if I am not able to complete either the 10-week or the 400-hour requirement?

Fellowship recipients MUST complete both the 10-week and the 400-hour work requirement (except as noted above) and should schedule their summer activities accordingly. UW Law will consider exceptions to this rule only in the event of extreme extenuating circumstances. An unexpected event arising during the summer, such as a debilitating physical illness, would likely qualify as an extenuating circumstance. Law Review/Journal commitments and personal travel plans are not considered justifications for an exception. At the end of the summer, each employer will be required to certify that the student completed the requisite weeks and hours of work. By completing the SPSF application and providing your employer's contact information you are consenting to OCPD contacting your employer to confirm you completed the required hours.

If a circumstance arises during the summer which causes you to leave your employment prior to fulfilling the 10-week/400-hour work requirement, you should immediately contact Lindsay Slaker (lslaker@wisc.edu), who will inform you how the circumstances will affect your fellowship status. It is possible your award could be revoked. If the award has already been granted, and revocation becomes necessary, the amount of the award will be billed as tuition.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

What is the SPSF deadline?

The deadline to apply is **Sunday, March 23, 2025 at 11:59pm.**

How is my SPSF application evaluated?

Applications will be evaluated by the Student Awards Committee. Funding decisions will be made based on information provided within the application. GPA will not be considered. If available funding will not cover all eligible applicants, various criteria will be used to make awards (see "What are my chances of receiving an SPSF award?" above). Other criteria may be used at the discretion of the Student Awards Committee.

What if I don't have a job by the application due date?

Because you may apply for SPSF before your summer plans are finalized, you may accept a job that you did not include on your original application.

Students may amend an application after submitting it, but before the fellowship awards are announced. To amend your application to add your employer, please contact Lindsay Slaker (lslaker@wisc.edu) as soon as possible. If there is sufficient time and funds remaining, the Committee will attempt to consider such an amended application as if it were part of the original application. However, the committee reserves the right to refuse consideration of any amended application.

If you are granted an SPSF award but need to amend your application after the award amount has been determined, you must submit an amended application as soon as possible. The Committee reserves the right to deny or reduce funding for the job listed in the amendment if it believes the job would have led to a less favorable evaluation of the application originally. The Committee must also evaluate if the change in job violates the Statement of Professional Obligation, which you signed when

entering Law School, which includes not rescinding the acceptance of an offer or continuing to apply for/interview with other organizations after accepting an offer.

Failure to amend your application after accepting a job other than that described in your SPSF application may result in forfeiture of your SPSF award and/or other penalties as deemed appropriate by the Law School.

What if I receive a summer public interest position after the SPSF application deadline?

If you are actively seeking qualifying public interest employment, but have not received an offer by the March 23, 2025 deadline, you should still submit an SPSF application. If you obtain a summer public interest position after the deadline, please contact Lindsay Slaker (lslaker@wisc.edu) immediately. If time and funding remain available, the Committee will consider the application.

When will I know if I have received an SPSF?

Funding decisions for 2025 SPSF awards will be announced in mid-April 2025. Applicants will be notified via email.

OTHER FUNDING AWARDS

UW Law School is proud to offer several Fellowship Awards through generous donations. Students interested in applying to the below awards do so by completing the same [SPSF Application](#), making sure to answer the supplemental questions associated with each funding award they wish to be considered for.

All of the below awards have the same summer internship requirements laid out in the “Job Eligibility” section above, as well as additional requirements regarding the position. As with all SPSF applications, students applying for the below awards are encouraged and expected to apply to additional outside sources of funding.

Please note that students receiving each of the below awards are required to participate in Stewardship efforts, which could include drafting letters of appreciation to the funder, and/or attending events hosted by the funder.

What is the Gracie Summer Fellows Program featured on the application?

Thanks to a generous gift from University of Wisconsin Law School alum Liz Gracie ('83), we are pleased to offer the Gracie Summer Fellows Program. The purpose of the Program is to foster an attitude of public interest among students, to expand the public interest programming at UW Law School, and to support students demonstrating a commitment to public interest law.

Concurrent with the SPSF application process, the Committee will select up to two Gracie Summer Fellows. These Fellows must work in a public interest position in summer 2025 and commit to working with OCPD to develop programming for the 2025-2026 school year that will impact multiple students and encourage a culture of public service among their fellow students (“Programming”). Programming may take various formats but must be approved by OCPD and result in at least two events and/or related resources in the 2025-2026 academic year. Gracie Fellows will take the lead in designing and implementing the Programming, so proposals should be such that Programming can reasonably be accomplished by a student in one academic year.

Each selected student will receive an award of \$5,500 for full-time summer public interest work. If a student receives a Gracie Summer Fellows award, they will not be eligible to receive an SPSF award.

To apply for the Gracie Summer Fellows Program, a student must meet the eligibility requirements for the Summer Public Service Fellowship and submit a completed SPSF application and Gracie Summer Fellows supplement: [SPSF Application](#).

What is the Children’s Justice Project (CJP) featured on the application?

Each year, CJP fellows are awarded up to \$5,000 for summer legal work that benefits children. The actual award amount may vary, depending on the number of selected recipients, and whether the selected fellows receive funding from other sources.

CJP fellowships are awarded to students whose summer legal work benefits children. CJP fellows must work for a public or private sector organization or agency that is unable to pay a salary, or pays a very low salary or stipend, to summer law interns. Government agencies that focus on children will count. The work may be domestic or international.

Fellowship recipients are officially recognized in the graduation program. All recipients of the CJP fellowship will be required to prepare, upon receipt of the award and after the completion of the recipient’s summer work, letters to the CJP advisory board, as well as to the Theda Clark Smith Foundation, whose generous support not only helped CJP create this fellowship program, but has financially sustained the fellowship.

Each recipient is also required to make a brief presentation on the experience at a CJP meeting during the Fall 2025 semester. The letter and presentation should describe the organization where the recipient worked, the type of work the recipient completed, and a summary of the recipient’s experience. Thus, any applicants for the CJP award consent to their names being shared with the CJP leadership, CJP advisory board, and the Theda Clark Smith Foundation if they are selected.

To apply for the CJP fellowship, a student must submit a completed SPSF application and CJP supplement: [SPSF Application](#).

What is the Boardman Clark Summer Public Interest Fellowship?

Recognizing that people of all backgrounds thrive in a more equitable community, Boardman Clark established this program in support of the Law School’s commitment to preparing its students to help address persistent problems of racial, social and economic inequity. The Boardman Clark Summer Public Interest Fellowship will provide \$4,500 in financial assistance to a UW Law student who has completed their first year of Law School and has accepted summer employment in 2025 to do public interest law in the greater Madison area.

To be eligible for this award, you must be a 1L and meet the other requirements of SPSF. Additionally, you must answer the supplemental questions on the application form: [SPSF Application](#).

What is the Joel J. Rabin Social Justice Internship?

Thanks to a generous donation from the Rabin Family, we are able to offer The Joel J. Rabin Social Justice Internship. This internship award is designed to offer one or more awards of up to \$5,500 to students committed to a social justice career with financial need.

To qualify, you must meet the requirements of SPSF, answer supplemental questions on the application form, and be willing to provide a statement to be shared with the Rabin Family describing how the award assisted you in meeting your social justice goals and be willing to participate in Law School programming regarding public interest summer experiences.

Complete the SPSF application and answer the Joel J. Rabin Social Justice supplemental questions here: [SPSF Application](#).

What is the Arlen Christenson Environmental Law Fellowship?

Thanks to a generous donation from alumna Caroline Fribance (UW Law '74), we are able to offer the Arlen Christenson Environmental Law Fellowship award every other year (odd years starting in 2025). This donation honors and celebrates Emeritus Professor of Law and Environmental Studies Arlen Christenson who made a tremendous impact on countless students throughout his career. With the goal of honoring Professor Christenson while also providing formative opportunities for growth and development for the recipient, this award is designed to offer one or more awards up to \$5,000 to students who demonstrate a commitment to a career in environmental law and take a summer position at a public interest or government entity in environmental law or a closely related field.

Complete the SPSF application and answer the Arlen Christenson Environmental Law supplemental questions here: [SPSF Application](#).

What is the Macaulay Fellowship?

Thanks to a generous donation from Stewart Macaulay, in honor of his late wife Jackie Macaulay (UW Law '83), we are able to offer two (2) students a \$5,000 award who have demonstrated interest in public interest careers. Recipients must be accepted for a summer fellowship for full-time legal work in public interest or a closely related field. Based on Jackie Macaulay's interests, the preference will be for students with an interest in law related to women's reproduction, adoption law, and facilitation of legal representation for people with modest resources.

Complete the SPSF application and answer the Jackie Macaulay Fellowship supplemental questions here: [SPSF Application](#).

What are the PILF/WLSA Awards?

The Public Interest Law Foundation and the Women's Law Student Association support students working in public interest and/or women's issues with funds raised from the Jackie Macaulay Auction. To be considered for this funding, you must answer the 3 supplemental questions on the application form. A separate committee, including students, will evaluate the PILF/WLSA applicants anonymously.

To be considered for this funding, you must answer the PILF/WLSA supplemental questions on the application form here: [SPSF Application](#).

What is the Morris Slavney Memorial Internship Fund?

The Morris Slavney Memorial Internship Fund is a fellowship awarded to a UW Law student who is employed at the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission for the summer. Applicants must explain their interest in labor law, as well as how their summer internship fits in with their long-term goals.

To be considered for this funding, you must have accepted a summer role at the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, must complete the SPSF application, and answer the Morris Slavney Memorial Internship Fund supplemental questions on the application form: [SPSF Application](#).

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

State Bar of Wisconsin Labor & Employment Law Section Summer Scholarship

The Labor & Employment Law Section of the State Bar of Wisconsin comprises a dynamic group of attorneys who practice in all facets of employment and labor law. Key among this Section's initiatives is fostering interest among new generations of L&E lawyers. Accordingly, the Labor & Employment Law Section is proud to announce a pair of \$5,000 scholarships which are available to one student from the University of Wisconsin Law School and one student from Marquette University Law School. The student must have secured a summer appointment in public interest that is unpaid and substantially related to the work of L&E law. The deadline to apply is March 3, 2025. See application instructions on Symplicity, Job ID #44924.

Equal Justice America

Equal Justice America offers summer fellowship grants up to \$5,000. These grants are available to law students who are working full time for a civil legal aid or civil rights organization. Students must secure a full-time (35 hours per week) placement for the summer working a minimum of 10 weeks. Government agencies and public defenders offices do not qualify. The deadline to apply is March 24, 2025. Applications can be submitted here: [Equal Justice America](#)

Robert Masur Fellowship in Civil Liberties

The Robert Masur Fellowship is open to first-year law students who intend to carry out significant activities during the summer in the areas of civil rights and/or civil liberties. The award amount is \$3,000, and the deadline is April 18, 2025. Click here to apply: [Robert Masur Fellowship](#)

ABA John J. Curtin Fellowship

This Fellowship is awarded to students who have secured summer positions with bar association programs, legal services programs, and non-profit organizations with programs or services dedicated to meeting the legal needs and concerns of homeless and indigent people and their advocates. Selected students will receive \$3,500. The deadline is March 2, 2025. Click here to apply: [ABA John J. Curtin Fellowship](#)

PSJD.org

PSJD offers a regularly updated resource listing summer funding sources. (Note: the links are correct, even if the deadline listed is not.) Many are geographically or subject-matter specific. Click here to view the page: [PSJD Summer Funding Sources](#)