

## Lawyers for America Partnership Proposal

We are pleased that you are interested in the Lawyers for America program. LfA is a two-year fellowship program, designed to meet the growing demand for study that integrates doctrinal and practical knowledge, improves employment prospects for law graduates, and closes the justice gap. The first (3L) year of LfA consists of a closely supervised full-time, full-academic-year placement at a government or non-profit law office partner site, complemented each semester by classroom study intended to deepen the fellows' learning from practice. After graduation, fellows take the summer off to study for and take the California Bar. They then return to the same partner site for a second year, as exceptionally well trained, acculturated first-year attorneys.

We seek partner sites committed to the education and professional development of law students. Because the first fellowship year replaces the traditional 3L law school curriculum, it is essential that this year be an educational experience that is structured, rigorous, and varied enough to merit the 16 units of academic credit awarded. Many of the questions below are tailored to identify in some detail the educational experience offered by a placement at the partner site. In particular, a successful placement offers: significant training in substantive and procedural law, close supervision by an experienced legal professional, structures for regular and substantive feedback, and a defined learning arc that includes progressively more complex lawyering tasks.

### Organization

Please provide any information about your organization (mission, history, size, office location(s), etc.) that you think would be helpful to student applicants.

**The Contra Costa Superior Court is a collegial, high-workload, trial-level courthouse, serving one of the largest and most diverse counties in the state. The main courthouse is located in Martinez. For more general information, please see [cc-courts.org](http://cc-courts.org).**

### Workplace

If your organization has more than one office location, please note the location to which the fellow would be assigned in the first and second years.

### **Martinez**

For each of the above offices, please note (approximately) how many FTE attorneys and non-attorney staff work in that office.

**The court consists of 39 judges and 2.8 commissioners.**

### Supervision

What is the name and job title of the person you expect to be the fellow's supervisor and the LfA liaison? Will other attorneys be giving the fellow assignments as well?

**The primary liaison to LfA is Presiding Judge Barry Goode. As described below, the fellow will be assigned to different departments during the two-year fellowship, where s/he will be supervised by individual judges and research attorneys.**

What formal training will the fellow be provided by your office? Please describe the duration, nature, and scope of that training.

**The fellow will have the opportunity to rotate through different divisions of the court, i.e., civil, family and/or juvenile. As the fellow starts a new rotation, s/he will have a day or two of orientation to introduce the fellow to the variety of work inherent in that rotation. As the rotation proceeds, there will be further training as different types of assignments arise. During the first year, the fellow will also be provided an orientation to the clerk's office so that s/he may gain an in-depth understanding of the administration of a California superior court. In addition, the fellow will be provided numerous and varied informal observation opportunities, to maximize exposure to lawyering methods and styles, as well as to the local bar. For example, the fellow will be encouraged to attend interesting arguments and trials, as well as the court's monthly appellate calendar.**

What additional training opportunities (regular in-services, conferences, etc.) will be available to the fellow during the two-year fellowship?

**The fellow will work very closely with the judges in the assigned division. We expect "training" will be a constant feature of the fellowship.**

Supervisors will be asked to participate in periodic formal written evaluations during the 3L year. What additional evaluation and feedback structures will you implement for the fellow throughout the fellowship?

**Supervising research attorneys and judge will provide detailed feedback on individual assignments.**

Does your office currently employ, or has it recently employed, post-graduate fellows and/or volunteer attorneys? Does your office host externs earning academic credit? Would the LfA fellow(s) supplement or replace other fellows/volunteers?

**The court does not currently employ post-graduate fellows.**

**The court does not currently host externs earning academic credit.**

#### Fellow's Work and Professional Development

To maximize her/his professional development, the fellow should be assigned lawyering tasks of increasing complexity and responsibility during the course of the entire fellowship. The second semester should build on the first, and the post-graduate year should include tasks typical of an entry-level attorney.

Below, please describe as concretely and specifically as possible the work that the fellow will perform in her/his first semester.

**During the first semester, the fellow will be assigned to the Civil Litigation department, where s/he will provide research and writing support to the research attorneys and judges.**

**This semester will immerse the fellow in state court trial and law and motions work, providing an overview of the life of a civil case, as well as significant research and writing experience.**

**For examples of the types of cases that come before the three judges in Civil Litigation, go to [cc-courts.org](http://cc-courts.org) and click on “Tentative Rulings” then on “Civil” and then on any of the links below Departments 6, 31, or 33.**

Please briefly describe what additional skills and experiences you anticipate that the second semester will offer.

**During the second semester, the fellow will be assigned to Complex Litigation, where s/he will work on more complex issues and cases.**

**The fellow will be exposed to new areas of substantive and procedural law, including class actions, CEQA, construction defects and many other types of multi-party complex litigation.**

**For examples of Complex Civil Litigation, go to [cc-courts.org](http://cc-courts.org) and click on “Tentative Rulings” then on “Civil” and then on any of the links below Department 9.**

Finally, describe the fellow’s responsibilities during the post-graduate year.

**In the second year, the fellow will be assigned to Family Law and/or Juvenile. These divisions do not currently have assigned research attorneys, and the fellow will function as a research attorney in those assignments, under the direct supervision of judges in those divisions.**

#### Preferred pre- and co-requisites

What, if any, classes *must* a fellow take before starting work at your organization? Include both substantive/doctrinal classes, as well as skills classes. What classes would you *prefer* that candidates take before starting? Please note whether fellows could take these classes *during* the fellowship.

**Civil Procedure and Evidence are preferred.**

Fellows may be able to take classes during the fellowship. That should be discussed with the judge with whom the fellow is working. If there are other requirements or preferences (e.g., prior experience in a particular field or language ability), please note them here.

In addition to eight units of fieldwork credit, LfA fellows will earn four units through accompanying classroom work each semester. If there is an area of substantive law or professional skills that would ideally be covered in the classroom portion, please note that here.

LfA fellows are expected to work a minimum of 32 hours/week at the partner site. To earn the four units/semester of classroom credit, they will need to take a very limited course load on campus. What

days/times would the fellow need to be consistently available, e.g. for weekly staff meetings or a particular court calendar? We will try to accommodate those scheduling needs to the extent possible.

Finally, please feel free to tell us anything else you think might be useful for the LfA program or student applicants.

**The Contra Costa Superior Court is committed to providing a rich educational experience to the LfA fellow. This placement offers a unique opportunity to work in a variety of substantive law areas over the course of two years and to learn from an array of distinguished judges and experienced research attorneys. It is expected that the fellow's assignments can be tailored in some part to the fellow's particular interests.**