

University of Wisconsin Law School

Summer Public Service Fellowships

2015 FACT SHEET FOR APPLICANTS

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 that this fact sheet does not answer, please contact Emily Kite (emily.kite@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 low-paid summer public service jobs**.

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

Students who receive an SPSF award may receive an award up to \$3,500. The amount of the award may depend on a number of factors, including whether the student will incur additional living or travel expenses because of the summer position.

Who can apply for an SPSF award?

Any returning, enrolled University of Wisconsin Law School student may apply. This includes 1Ls, 2Ls, and any joint-degree students who will not have graduated from the law school prior to completing work at the funded position.

Students who transfer to another law school in the fall following the position being funded 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 2015, you **must** notify Emily Kite in the Office of Career and Professional Development as part of your SPSF application. Further, if you receive an SPSF grant and subsequently commit to transfer, we will expect you to repay the SPSF award in full. Failure (a) to notify OCPD about a potential transfer and/or (b) 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 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, or other summer Law School for-credit academic program. As stated in the application, priority for SPSF funding will be given to students whose summer position offers them an experience that they could not obtain during the academic year through a law school clinical or externship program.

What if I volunteer for a position instead of taking it for academic credit?

If you elect to volunteer for a position which could also be an externship for which you could receive academic credit as part of a Law School externship program, you may apply for an SPSF award. However, please note that priority for funding will be given to students doing work that they would not be able to do during the academic year through an established law school clinical or externship program. For example, students who work for the Wisconsin Department of Justice may not receive high priority for funding because they could work in those positions during the year for academic credit. Whether your position is part of an already established program will be considered by the SPSF Committee when reviewing your application.

What are the chances of receiving an SPSF award?

It is impossible to know in advance how likely it is that an applicant will receive a fellowship. Even assuming that all applicants meet the eligibility criteria, the total number of fellowships awarded will depend on the number of applications submitted, the quality of the applications, the amount of money available, and the amount of each award.

In the event that available funding will not cover all students who apply with qualifying summer positions, the following criteria will be considered when making awards:

- Completeness of the application packet;
- Whether the position is unique and not otherwise provided for in an established law school clinical, externship, or internship program;
- Whether the applicant will receive other funding for the summer employment;
- How the internship aligns with the applicant's future goals and long-term commitment to public service, including, but not limited to, development of appropriate legal skills for his or her legal career;
- Applicant's year in law school.

If there are special circumstances that you think the SPSF Committee should consider in addressing 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. 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 salary from the position, a grant from another organization, or any other funding), you *must* disclose that to OCPD immediately. 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.

In order to allocate resources to those most in need, for this program, total funding from outside sources and SPSF cannot exceed \$5,000 combined. Therefore, SPSF funding will be reduced or eliminated for applicants who obtain outside funding where the total awards exceed \$5,000.

JOB ELIGIBILITY

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

- With a non-profit organization or a government agency;
- Legal in nature;
- One that 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 that provides supervision from a licensed attorney.

If you have any questions about the criteria, please contact Emily Kite 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. The Law School 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 are not considered justifications for a waiver. At the end of the summer, each employer will be required to certify that the student completed the requisite weeks and hours of work.

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 Emily Kite, who will inform you how the circumstances will affect your fellowship status.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

How is my SPSF application evaluated?

Applications will be evaluated by a committee of law school faculty, administrators, student representatives of the Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF), and/or academic staff. Funding decisions will be made on the basis of information provided within the application. GPA will not be considered. In the event that 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 SPSF Committee.

What if I want to accept a job that was not included on my original application?

If circumstances change and you want to accept a job that was not included on your original application, you must amend the application. In order to amend an application, you must revise and submit new Parts 1, 2 and 3(a) (Personal Statement). A revised Part 2 is necessary because you must describe how the amended job meets the eligibility criteria; a revised Part 3(a) is necessary because it must describe how the amended job fits into both past and future commitment to public service work.

If you need to amend an application after submitting it, but before the fellowship awards are announced, please contact Emily Kite as soon as possible. If there is sufficient time, the selection committee will attempt to consider such an amended application as if it were part of the original application. However, the selection committee reserves the right to refuse consideration of any amended application.

If you are granted an SPSF award but need to amend your application, you must submit an amended application as soon as possible. The SPSF Committee reserves the right to deny or reduce funding for the job listed in the amendment if it believes that the job would have led to a less favorable evaluation of the application originally.

Failure to amend your application after accepting a job other than that described in your SPSF fund 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 26, 2015 deadline, you should still submit an SPSF application (see page 1 of the application for details). If you obtain a summer public interest position after the deadline, please contact Emily Kite immediately. If funding remains available, the Committee will consider the application.

When will I know if I have received an SPSF?

Funding decisions for 2015 SPSF awards will be announced in the middle to the end of April 2015. Applicants will be notified via email.

SPSF PAYMENTS

When will I receive my SPSF money?

OCPD will confirm each applicant's employment approximately two weeks after the "Expected Start Date" listed on the application. If it is confirmed that you are employed, it is expected that you will receive one lump-sum payment over the summer, likely in late June or early July.

Will the SPSF award be taxed?

The SPSF award is considered fellowship income by the IRS. It is therefore not subject to tax withholding by the University. The University of Wisconsin Law School does not issue a form 1099-MISC for the tax year to report your Summer Stipend as income, so you should consider your award notification email as your official documentation of the receipt of funding. Your stipend must be reported on your federal and state tax forms if you are required to file taxes. If you have questions, please consult a tax advisor about the taxability of your SPSF award and refer to IRS Topic 421 regarding scholarships and fellowship grants.