

PCC Paralegal Program

Cooperative Education/Internship Manual



PCC Paralegal Internship/Cooperative Education Program

The Paralegal Cooperative Education/Internship Program is a critical supplement to the classroom learning experience, providing hands-on opportunities for students to practice their legal skills under close supervision. To qualify for a paralegal internship, you must be [admitted to the PCC Paralegal Program](#) and have completed at least 18 credits toward your Paralegal degree or certificate (or obtain instructor approval to waive this requirement). Internships for the PCC Paralegal Program are completed through the [PCC Cooperative Education Program](#). PCC Paralegal student interns work in law offices of all sizes, in-house

legal departments, legal non-profits, prosecutors' and public defenders' offices, city, state, and federal agencies, public interest organizations, and other legal organizations.

The first step is finding an internship worksite.

Paralegal students are responsible for finding their own law firm or legal internship worksites, but the Paralegal Program regularly sends out internship opportunities via email that paralegal students can apply for. Be sure to check your PCC email regularly! Further, the Program is happy to brainstorm potential internship sites, keeping the following requirements in mind:

- The worksite must offer experience that is related to your legal career goals.
- The work experience must provide an opportunity for new learning and skill development.
- A worksite supervisor must be available and willing to train, supervise, and evaluate you, and to communicate with the Paralegal Program representative.
- As the Paralegal Internship Instructor, I will review your employer evaluation and communicate with your supervisor. When possible, a brief conference with you and your supervisor is scheduled.
- You may already have a legal job that could qualify as an internship worksite.
- Employers are not obligated to hire a paralegal student intern after their internship. However, employers sometimes do offer interns continuing employment after a successful Cooperative Education experience.

See Appendix A for a list of past Paralegal internship placements and the best known contact person at that organization. Please note that there is no guarantee that any of these law firms or legal organizations will continue to accept PCC Paralegal Program interns, but this can be a good place to start looking for opportunities.

The second step is filling out the Cooperative Education forms.

Once a Paralegal student finds a legal internship worksite, the student and the employer-supervisor will fill out and sign the following forms:

- [coop-train-agree fillable \[pdf\]](#)

-
- [coop-learn-obj fillable \[pdf\]](#)

Writing learning objectives can be difficult; for help with the process [click here](#), or contact me to discuss! Once you fill out and sign these forms with your supervisor, send them to me for my approval and signature. Then I send them on to PCC Career Services, who verifies all the information and gets you registered for the [PL 280A Course credits](#). You cannot register yourself for the internship course, you have to go through the process laid out above.

The third step is completing work at an internship worksite.

Students must complete work at their internships that meets their learning objectives and credit-hour requirements. Students must work at their internship worksites for 30 hours per credit earned. So, for example, if a Paralegal student wants to replace a three-credit Paralegal classroom elective with an internship, they would register for a three-credit internship, and complete a minimum of 90 hours of substantive legal work over the course of the term. The legal work can be done on a schedule that is mutually acceptable to the employer and the student. Paralegal Cooperative Education/Internships may be paid or unpaid. As a part of the internship course, we also meet as a group twice over the course of the term, either in person or virtually, and I communicate with the student and supervisor about the internship experience.

The fourth step is completing an employer evaluation and reflection paper.

Employer-supervisors must fill out and return an employer evaluation at the end of the term, verifying that the PCC Paralegal student-intern completed the required 30+ hours of legal work per credit, and successfully met the learning objectives identified at the beginning of the term. Paralegal internships are all graded on a pass/no pass basis. Paralegal student-interns must also turn in a brief reflection paper about their internship experience at the end of the term.

For more information, see the [PCC Cooperative Education Student Handbook \[pdf\]](#). I hope to work with you on the internship process!

Appendix A- Selected Past PCC Paralegal Internship Placements

Internship Placement	Location	Description
Adidas, Inc.	5055 N. Greeley Ave., Portland, OR 97217	Corporate and Intellectual Property Law
Vestas- American Wind Technology, In c.	1417 N.W. Everett St., Portland, OR 97209	Vestas is the energy industry's global partner on sustainable energy solutions. They design, manufacture, install, and service wind turbines across the globe.
Columbia County Law Library	270 S. 1st St. Helens, OR 97051	Pro se assistance with family court forms and other court forms.
Federal Public Defender	101 S.W. Main St. #1700, Portland, OR 97204	EDiscovery and legal assistance on federal criminal defense.
Guardian Partners	10814 N.E. Halsey St., Portland, OR 97220	Guardian partners provide education, case monitoring and resources to Oregon Guardians and their families on behalf of the Court System.
Metropolitan Public Defender Community Law	630 S.W. 5th Ave., Ste. 500 Portland, OR 97204	Community Law Division, a branch of Metropolitan Public Defender, is a non-profit law firm that provides criminal public defense and other legal services in an effort to remove barriers to advancement for the

		vulnerable population in the Portland Metropolitan Area.
Edward L. Ferrero, P.C.	630 S.W. Meadows Rd. Ste. 150, Lake Oswego, OR 97035	Edward L Ferrero is an Estate planning, probate, real estate, and creditors' rights attorney.
MRHFM, LLC	80 S.E. Madison St. Ste 310, Portland, OR 97214	MRHFM is dedicated to helping mesothelioma victims and their families.
Victim Rights Law Center	520 S.W. Yamhill, Ste 430 Portland, OR 97204	The Victim Rights Law Center provides free comprehensive legal services sfor sexual assault victims with civil legal issues in Massachusetts and Oregon.
Kerr, Robichaux & Carroll	626 SE Alder St., Portland, OR 97214	Kerr, Robichaux & Carroll is the Pacific Northwest's preeminent Social Security disability law firm.
St. Andrew Legal Clinic	807 NE ALBERTA ST., PORTLAND, OR 97211	St. Andrew Legal Clinic serves low-income families with their family law needs. Attorneys work on a multitude of cases and use their expertise in the field of family law to improve the lives of their Clients.
PCC CLEAR Clinic	705 N Killingsworth Ave. Portland, OR 97217	Free legal clinic that provides the following free legal services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Criminal Records/eviction expungements ● DACA Renewals

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Immigration Court Navigation • Legal name and gender-marker changes • And other legal advice and legal service referrals
Ferder Casebeer French & Stern LLP	310 SW Fourth Ave, Suite 1018, Portland, Oregon 97204; 515 High St SE, Salem, OR 97301	Ferder Casebeer French & Stern LLP have been around for more than four decades and practice law in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal • Family • Personal Injury • And Appellate Law
The Commons Law Center	810 NW Marshall St, Ste 300 Portland, OR 97209	The Commons Law Center is a nonprofit law firm that offers sliding-scale legal services to modest means Oregonians, those who live below 400% of the federal poverty level.
Lewis and Clark Small Business Legal Clinic	310 SW Fourth Ave., Suite 1018 Portland, OR 97204	The SBLC provides business transactional legal services to low-income small and emerging businesses & reduces legal barriers for individuals who have been historically disenfranchised.

Appendix B- Sample Learning Objectives and Activities

1. **Objective:** Develop or improve ability to manage legal case files.

Activities: Organize and file client correspondence and court papers.

2. **Objective:** Improve ability to draft legal documents.

Activities: Draft, revise, and proofread letters, pleadings, briefs, and other legal documents using available templates for current cases.

3. **Objective:** Improve ability to conduct relevant legal research.

Activities: Conduct legal research on given topics using some combination of Westlaw, OJIN, and other research sites.

4. **Objective:** Develop or improve ability to gather relevant evidence for legal proceedings.

Activities: Obtain medical records and summarize them; obtain police reports and summarize them; obtain other records and summarize them.

5. **Objective:** Develop or improve legal intake and interviewing skills.

Activities: Conduct client intake, prepare questions in a chronological outline, interview clients and witnesses, and summarize results of interviews.

6. **Objective:** Develop or improve client communication skills.

Activities: Communicate with clients via email, phone, video chat and in-person about the status of their cases or other matters.

7. **Objective:** Develop or improve ability to file legal documents.

Activities: Prepare filings for submission to proper court having jurisdiction; successfully file legal documents with the proper court or tribunal through the proper system (e-filing or otherwise).

8. **Objective:** Improve understanding of how a given area of law works.

Activities: Review cases, submit forms, documents and follow case progression. Sit in on meetings, interviews, and attend hearings and trials as permitted.

9. **Objective:** Develop or increase trauma-informed legal services skills.

Activities: Complete Trauma-Informed Oregon training modules and/or other trauma-informed care trainings, and put the principles learned into practice in working with clients.

10. **Objective:** Develop or increase cultural humility and anti-oppressive legal skills.

Activities: Complete anti-oppression, anti-racism, and cultural humility in the legal field trainings, and put the principles learned into practice in working with clients.