



OFFICE OF THE

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

TODD SPITZER, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The Orange County District Attorney's Office has nineteen separate prosecutorial units which utilize law student volunteers. The following is a brief description of each unit and the expected work responsibilities of a law clerk in each unit.

1. CENTRAL JUSTICE CENTER

700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

The Central Justice Center covers the cities of Santa Ana, Tustin, Orange, and unincorporated areas of the central county served by the Orange County Sheriff's Department. They receive and process felony cases, handling the case through the preliminary hearing. In addition, they file, process, and conduct jury trials on misdemeanor cases from those jurisdictions. Law clerks assigned to the Central Justice Center need to possess research and analysis skills sufficient to prepare and respond to motions arising out of these cases. Certified Law Clerks can be called upon to conduct preliminary hearings in felony cases. In addition, they will be asked to do legal research and prepare memos on a variety of legal topics, primarily evidence related areas. Law clerks will have an opportunity to observe jury trials and to work with misdemeanor trial lawyers on their cases. The experience will allow the law clerk to observe the day-to-day activities involved in prosecution of criminal cases and to participate in evaluating the legal issues that arise in these cases.

2. CONSUMER & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION UNIT

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Consumer Protection Unit focuses on false advertising and unfair business practices affecting Orange County citizens. Attorneys specializing in consumer protection prosecute a variety of unfair business practice violations against individuals and corporations. Recent prosecutions include illegal towing, auto repair fraud, fraudulent labeling, short weight products, and adulterated nutritional supplements. Depending on the facts, attorneys prosecute criminally or civilly under Business and Professions Code sections 17200 and 17500. Agencies with whom consumer protection attorneys work include the California Department of Weights and Measures, the California Department of Health, the California Department of Motor Vehicles, the California Department of Corporations, the Federal Trade Commission, the California Bureau of Auto Repair, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Department of Pesticide Regulation and the Medical Board of California.

Law clerks assigned to this unit research complex consumer protection issues and assist in all aspects of case preparation and litigation. The assignment offers unique experience within the DA's Office as students have the opportunity to gain both civil and criminal experience. Law clerks receive hands on training and are able to work with attorneys in building cases from the ground up.

The Orange County District Attorney's Office Environmental Protection Unit is a specialized unit made up of prosecutors and support staff trained to handle complex environmental enforcement cases that affect the citizens of Orange County and throughout the State of California. Attorneys specializing in environmental protection prosecute a wide variety of cases against both individuals and corporations. Depending on the facts of each case, attorneys prosecute these environmental offenses as criminal prosecutions and/or civil enforcement actions. Examples of some of the types of cases that the Environmental Protection Unit prosecutes include, but are not limited to: disposal of hazardous waste, air pollution, hazardous waste control act violations, water pollution, animal cruelty, hazardous materials management violations, medical waste, Fish and Wildlife violations, OSHA violations, and natural resources degradation.

Law clerks assigned to this unit research complex environmental protection issues and assist in all aspects of case preparation and litigation. The assignment offers unique experience within the DA's Office as students have the opportunity to gain both civil and criminal experience. Law clerks receive hands on training and are able to work with attorneys in building cases from the ground up.

3. FAMILY PROTECTION UNIT

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Family Protection Unit vertically prosecutes felony domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and child abduction cases. Prosecutors assigned to the unit handle cases throughout the county. The law clerk will assist the prosecutor in all phases of case and trial preparation. Assignments include legal research, preparing and responding to motions, and assisting in the discovery process. Law clerks who are certified may have the opportunity to present witnesses at motions or preliminary hearings. All law clerks are encouraged to attend unit related court proceedings, including jury trials.

4. FELONY PANEL UNIT

700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

The Felony Panel is a trial unit that handles general felony cases after the preliminary hearing stage. Felony Panel DDA's are responsible for trying a wide variety of cases such as drug sales, commercial and residential burglaries, robberies, kidnapping, carjacking and attempted murder. Felony Panel DDA's also argue and write oppositions to mental health diversion motions. Law clerks working on a Felony Panel assignment will have a variety of responsibilities primarily dealing with the preparation of cases for jury trial. Such trial preparation could include review and summarizing transcripts to be used at trial; assistance in preparation of trial binders; and opportunities to be present during witness interviews in preparation for trial. In addition, law

clerks in the Felony Panel would get the opportunity to research and write legal motions, including opposition to Penal Code section 1172.1 motions and certified law clerks would be able to argue such motions in court.

5. GANG/TARGET UNIT

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Gang/T.A.R.G.E.T Unit is comprised of deputy district attorneys that vertically prosecute violent crimes committed by participants of criminal street gangs throughout Orange County. These cases involve charges including murder, attempted murder, assault with a firearm, carjacking, robbery, drug sales, and gun possession. Some of the prosecutors work out of police stations in cities throughout the county that have a significant gang presence. A law clerk can expect to do legal research on trial issues, evidentiary issues, and the gang anti-violence statutes. Law clerks will also assist our prosecutors in organizing their cases for trial, summarizing witness interviews and processing discovery materials. A certified law clerk may also have the opportunity to appear in court and argue a motion or present a preliminary hearing. Law clerks will be encouraged to attend and observe court proceedings. Observing an experienced gang prosecutor in a preliminary hearing or jury trial will enable a law clerk to learn in the courtroom environment.

6. HARBOR JUSTICE CENTER

4601 Jamboree Road
Newport Beach, CA 92660

Harbor Justice Center works with the police agencies of Irvine, Newport Beach, Laguna Beach, UC Irvine, Saddleback College, State Parks and Rec, Orange County Sherriff's Department, and California Highway Patrol. Our team motto is "Justice by the Sea". As a law clerk with Harbor Justice Center, you will gain exposure to a wide range of misdemeanor and felony criminal cases. You will have the opportunity to assist our attorneys by conducting legal research, preparing memos on a variety of legal topics, and drafting responses to various motions. As a certified law clerk, you will have the opportunity to make appearances on the record in front of a judge—arguing legal motions or presenting evidence in felony preliminary hearings. Law clerks with Harbor Justice Center begin to develop crucial courtroom litigation skills in the areas of persuasive argument, witness and evidence preparation, and direct and cross-examination. Law clerks are encouraged to observe in court proceedings and can often sit in on various stages of a jury trial. Any student interested in pursuing a career in criminal law or a career as a trial attorney, will find that a clerkship with the D.A.'s Office offers valuable real-world experience that cannot be learned in the classroom. Two useful classes one should take prior to beginning a clerkship are Evidence and Criminal Procedure, as those will help you become a Certified Law Clerk. However, certification is not required. Familiarity with Westlaw and Lexis would also be helpful for research projects and motion writing.

7. THE HUMAN EXPLOITATION AND TRAFFICKING (HEAT) UNIT

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Human Trafficking Unit vertically prosecutes cases in which a defendant commercially exploits another individual for sex or labor. Victims of trafficking include both adults and children. The unit works extensively with the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force in addition to law enforcement around the country on the state and federal level. The law clerk will assist the prosecutors in this unit in all phases of case and trial preparation. Assignments include legal research, preparing and responding to motions, and law clerks who are certified will have the opportunity to examine witnesses at motions and preliminary hearings. All law clerks are encouraged to attend unit related court proceedings, including jury trials.

8. HOMICIDE UNIT

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Homicide Unit prosecutes all non-gang related homicides in Orange County. Staff members typically are involved in these cases from the investigation stage through filing, pre-trial, trial and sentencing. Law clerks assist the legal staff with research and analysis of legal issues arising mainly in the context of pretrial motions and admissibility of evidence at trial. This includes the preparation of legal memoranda and briefs. Additionally, law clerks are provided with opportunities to join the legal staff on occasions, such as case evaluation and strategy sessions, and for courtroom observation.

To be eligible for consideration, students must be in their second or third year of law school. Completion of courses in Evidence and/or Criminal Procedure is preferred. A minimum of 12 hours per week is expected.

9. INSURANCE FRAUD

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Insurance Fraud Unit prosecutes various white collar crimes involving insurance. Some examples are: 1) provider fraud involving doctors and lawyers billing for services not rendered, and unlawful kickback schemes; 2) premium fraud where employers under report their payroll to insurance companies to reduce cost of their insurance; 3) auto fraud involving collisions and stolen vehicle reports to collect insurance proceeds; 4) applicant fraud which involves employees feigning injuries or misrepresenting their employment to gain benefits; 5) public works fraud involving employees on a public works job failing to receive prevailing wages through various forms of fraud or theft; and 6) healthcare fraud involving rehabilitation centers preying on vulnerable people trying to rebuild their lives. Many of these cases involve large monetary losses proven by documentary evidence.

Law clerks assigned to this unit will require good analytical thinking, attention to detail and ability to organize large amounts of materials. Other responsibilities include writing briefs, researching issues, preparing for preliminary hearings and writing trial briefs.

10. JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER

341 The City Drive South

Orange, CA 92868

The Juvenile Unit prosecutes minors for a wide range of crimes including serious felonies to misdemeanors. The volunteer law clerk will assist the unit in responding to (and, sometimes arguing against) defense motions. They will also draft case summaries, provide memos on legal research issues, assist in the drafting of a juvenile court procedures manual, and learn the nuances of the juvenile justice system. When the law clerk is not responding to a motion or doing a research project, he or she is encouraged to assist the trial deputy district attorney in court.

11. MAJOR FRAUD

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Major Fraud Unit vertically prosecutes complex non-violent economic crime cases with substantial economic losses. Our cases involve a broad range of criminal fraud; e.g. elder fraud, major frauds with losses in excess of \$100,000, investment fraud, embezzlement, cyber/computer crimes, cryptocurrency scams, and theft by false pretenses. Because of the special expertise required, the unit's legal staff handles all its own motions, including Penal Code 995 motions, bail motions, asset freeze motions, motions to suppress, etc.

Law clerks would assist the attorneys and paralegals in all aspects of the development and litigation process of the cases. This could include researching legal issues, factually analyzing the evidence in a case and organizing it as well as charting the various relationships or events involved in these complex cases. Certified law clerks are sometimes permitted to argue motions and present the evidence at preliminary hearings.

12. NORTH JUSTICE CENTER

1275 North Berkeley Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92631

The North Justice Center in Fullerton serves the eight cities and various unincorporated areas within northern Orange County. As a law clerk with the Orange County District Attorney's Office, North Justice Center, you will have the opportunity to handle cases ranging from driving under the influence to attempted murder. You will be permitted (and encouraged) to interact with numerous law enforcement agencies, police officers, detectives, and civilian witnesses. Law clerks research, write, and (if certified) argue preliminary hearings and motions. Certified law clerks put on witness testimony during preliminary hearings and suppression motions. Law clerks may also assist with discovery and research issues as they arise. Due to the high volume of cases at North Court, law clerks are exposed to a wide variety of legal and courtroom experiences, and are encouraged to watch trials and otherwise observe the day-to-day workings of the courthouse.

13. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY & TRAINING

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 920703

The Professional Responsibility & Training Unit is responsible for the continuing education of all legal division personnel of the District Attorney's Office as well as providing continuing education opportunities for law enforcement agencies throughout the county. Through training seminars, classes, and written and video publications, the unit provides personnel with instruction and information across all subject matters related to criminal investigation, prosecution, and the general practice of law.

Law clerks assigned to the Professional Responsibility & Training Unit will have the unique opportunity to gain exposure to both fundamental topics and emerging issues in the practice of criminal law across all areas of prosecution through legal research and writing legal publications, court observation, and participation in trainings.

14. MENTAL HEALTH AND RECIDIVISM REDUCTION UNIT

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Mental Health and Recidivism Reduction Unit is responsible for prosecuting selected cases impacted by some of the most pressing issues in society, such as mental illness, homelessness, addiction, and trauma stemming from military service. This unit also has a research component, as it both studies existing programs, such as collaborative courts, and proposes new ones based on data and best practices. The goal is to help build a system that balances opportunity and accountability with programs that address some of the root causes of crime while staying committed to public safety.

Law clerks assigned to Mental Health/RRU will have the opportunity to take on some of the traditional duties of an OCDA law clerk, as well as some unique ones due to the nature of the unit. Traditional duties include legal research and motion writing, on topics such as mental health diversion, competency to stand trial, and not guilty by reason of insanity. Non-traditional assignments may include researching legal questions about potential programs, reviewing police reports for mental health or trauma-related content, and assisting with research and reports on various existing programs. Certified law clerks have the opportunity to appear on the record in the collaborative courts, conduct examination of witnesses in probable cause hearings, and conduct cross-examination or argument during contested mental health diversion motion hearings.

15. SEXUAL ASSAULT UNIT

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Sexual Assault Unit is dedicated to the prosecution of felony sex crimes, including child molestation and violent sex crimes against adults and children. The bulk of the work involves intensive trial work. The deputy district attorneys in the unit complete an average of 70 trials a year, with most resulting in life sentences. They work closely with sexual assault victims and victim advocates. They prosecute cases throughout the county and, therefore, work with all law enforcement agencies as well as the United States Attorney and FBI when the charges involve child pornography.

A Sexual Assault Unit law clerk is expected to research legal issues, draft memoranda and briefs,

prepare trial binders and exhibits, summarize transcripts, and organize large cases. If the student is certified, they may be asked to present a preliminary hearing or argue a motion. Law clerks are encouraged to attend trials and preliminary hearings and ask questions of the supervisor to broaden their knowledge and scope of the law and trial practice.

16. SPECIAL PROSECUTIONS

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

Unlike other vertical units in the Orange County District Attorney's Office, the Special Prosecutions Unit handles a great variety of cases. The unit, in fact, is responsible for over 25 types of cases. Among these are arson, hate crimes, political corruption, election code violations, extraditions, illegal bail bonds activity, public assistance fraud, vice crimes, organized crime, public records act requests, Brown Act violations, and other cases that require special attention. A law clerk would do legal research, help in case preparation, and assist Deputy District Attorneys in all aspects of the prosecution.

The Special Prosecutions Unit also oversees the Hate Crimes Unit, which prosecutes crimes where the perpetrator acted based on a bias against the victim's race, color, religion, national origin, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or gender.

17. WEST JUSTICE CENTER

8141 13th Street
Westminster, CA 92683

West Justice Center covers the cities of Huntington Beach, Garden Grove, Westminster, Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Seal Beach, Los Alamitos, and Cypress. As a law clerk with West Justice Center, you will gain exposure to a wide range of misdemeanor and felony criminal cases. You will have the opportunity to assist our attorneys by conducting legal research, preparing memos on a variety of legal topics, and drafting responses to various motions. As a certified law clerk, you will have the opportunity to make appearances on the record in front of a judge—arguing legal motions or presenting evidence in felony preliminary hearings. Law clerks with West Justice Center begin to develop crucial courtroom litigation skills in the areas of persuasive argument, witness and evidence preparation, and direct and cross-examination. Law clerks are encouraged to observe in court proceedings and can often sit in on various stages of a jury trial. Any student interested in pursuing a career in criminal law or a career as a trial attorney, will find that a clerkship with the D.A.'s Office offers valuable real-world experience that cannot be learned in the classroom. Two useful classes one should take prior to beginning a clerkship are Evidence and Criminal Procedure, as those will help you become a Certified Law Clerk.

18. WRITS & APPEALS

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92703

The Writs & Appeals Unit occupies a central position within the District Attorney's Office working collaboratively with every one of the office's 19 other prosecutorial units. This unit is responsible

for representing the District Attorney's Office in all writ proceedings and appellate matters before the Appellate Division of the Superior Court, the District Court of Appeal, the California Supreme Court, and the federal courts, on prosecutions arising from throughout the office. The unit is also responsible for handling a litany of motions in the Superior Court from various units including motions to suppress evidence, dismiss prosecutions, change venue, demurrers, recusals, and other matters. In addition to the unit's litigation work, the attorneys of the Appellate section also act as specialized legal advisors to the office's prosecutors by offering guidance on various legal issues that arise in diverse prosecutions.

Law clerks assigned to the Writs & Appeals Unit will get exposure to diverse legal issues arising in prosecutions throughout the entire office and at all procedural stages through case review, legal research and writing on various issues. Applicants need not be certified. However, certified law clerks may possibly be afforded opportunities when available, to argue motions and conduct certain evidentiary hearings.

19. POST-CONVICTION AND SPECIAL LITIGATION

300 North Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701

The Post Conviction and Special Litigation Unit is tasked with litigating statutorily available relief to inmates and other convicted individuals. Related statutes are generally intended to provide resentencing for various reasons driven largely by more recent changes in the law and judicial discretion. Litigation includes both brief writing and oral advocacy involving rapidly evolving and changing application of these new laws. The unit also oversees parole hearings and other related procedures where prosecutorial involvement is required.