



Legal Internship

ArchCity Defenders (ACD) is a holistic legal advocacy organization that combats the criminalization of poverty and state violence, especially in communities of color. ACD's foundation of civil and criminal legal representation, social services, impact litigation, policy and media advocacy, and community collaboration achieves and inspires justice and equitable outcomes for people throughout the St. Louis region and beyond.

ArchCity Defenders envisions a society liberated from systems of oppression where the promise of justice and racial equity is realized; communities where our approach to public safety prioritizes investment in well-being, health, and transformation without relying on criminalization and incarceration; and people living freely in their communities, thriving regardless of their race or income.

While continuing to provide holistic legal advocacy to the indigent in St. Louis, ArchCity Defenders is working on broad-based change to the St. Louis region's criminal legal system. One way we advance this agenda is through the use of **impact litigation**. In order to effectively file and argue civil rights impact cases, it is necessary to have extensive knowledge of legal precedents, state and federal statutes, and county and municipal ordinances. Legal interns will perform fact and legal research to bolster our understanding; draft memos synthesizing their findings; assist with discovery and investigation; interview and communicate with clients; and attend court proceedings with staff attorneys.

Although impact litigation has become one effective tool for change, ArchCity Defenders remains dedicated to representing our clients and changing the lives of our clients on an individual basis. To this end, we provide **direct representation** in housing, elder, consumer, family, criminal, and other areas of the law. We also have a partnership with the Migrant and Immigrant Community Action (MICA) Project to receive referrals and provide representation in immigration court bond detention hearings. Legal interns will interview and communicate with clients; conduct fact and legal research; draft memoranda, motions, and pleadings; assist with discovery and investigation; and attend court proceedings with staff attorneys.

Another effective tool for change is ArchCity's **policy work**. Interns will research and analyze policy issues; draft legislation, issue briefs, policy statements, press releases, and op-eds; attend hearings; coordinate and assist with public education; track local, state, and federal legislation and regulatory actions; and build power and support broader campaigns through work for and with organizers and movements.

Legal interns function as a part of an interdisciplinary team and coordinate with attorneys and staff to support ACD's mission and expand our reach. A successful intern needs to be assertive, independent, persistent, empathetic, proactive, and flexible. They will need to take initiative, use problem-solving skills, see projects through to completion, and become a strong advocate for themselves and others.

Qualifications:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Excellent legal research and writing skills
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Detail-oriented approach to working in a team-driven organization
- High capacity for problem solving and self-direction and the ability to work independently within time constraints
- Flexible and able to respond appropriately to ACD's changing needs
- Commitment to racial and economic justice and systems change
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity toward diverse populations; awareness of structures of power, privilege, and oppression

Proficiency in Spanish or other languages is appreciated, but not required

All internships are unpaid, volunteer positions. However, ACD will work with students who secure funding from outside sources or to obtain class credit where available.

ArchCity Defenders is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people who identify with historically underserved or underrepresented communities, people of color, persons with disabilities, women, LGBTQIA+, and gender non-conforming applicants. ACD encourages applications from all individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, citizenship, disability, military or veteran status, and record of arrest or conviction.