

2017 Cornell Law School Summer Grant FAQs

October 20, 2016

1. DEFINITION

The Cornell Law School Summer Grant Program provides funding to Cornell Law Students for unpaid summer positions with public interest organizations, government agencies, and judges. A full-time Summer Grant of \$5,000 consists of two components: 1) a PIF (Public Interest Fellowship) grant; and 2) a Federal Work-Study grant.

1. PIF (Public Interest Fellowship) grants:

PIF grants are funded by the Law School. PIF grants are guaranteed for all 1Ls and 2Ls who secure eligible summer placements and meet PIF requirements as outlined below. The PIF application process is administered by the Office of Public Service.

2. Federal Work-Study grants:

The Federal Work-Study program is funded by the Federal Government. Work-Study grants are part of your financial aid package and are administered by the University through the Law School's Financial Aid Office.

Note: If you meet PIF grant requirements but are not eligible for a Federal Work-Study grant, your summer grant award will be \$1,600.

2. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO EARN THE SUMMER GRANT?

1Ls and 2Ls

- a. Complete and submit the on-line PIF grant application by **Wednesday, March 15**.
- b. Apply for Work-Study funding through the Financial Aid Office.
- c. Secure summer employment with a qualifying employer.

1Ls only

- d. Volunteer the required number of hours towards the PIF Cabaret.
- e. Attend the Public Interest Symposium on Friday, January 27.

3. WHO ARE QUALIFYING EMPLOYERS?

The employer must be a non-profit legal organization a government agency, or a judge. For example, federal, state and local agencies, prosecutors' offices, public defender offices, legal services organizations and other non-profits are qualifying employers. Federal, state, and local judges and courts qualify as well. As these departments should have their own funding available, jobs with Cornell Law School clinical programs, e-Rulemaking, Avon Center, or professors do not qualify for PIF funding.

4. CAN I USE THE SUMMER GRANT TO FUND AN INTERNSHIP OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.?

As Federal Work-Study funds cannot be used outside of the U.S, only the PIF portion of the summer grant can be used internationally. In light of this, Cornell will award five Public International Fellowships of \$5,000 each to students working for public international organizations or government agencies outside the U.S. Details will be available in January.

5. WHERE DO I GET A PIF GRANT APPLICATION AND HOW AND WHEN DO I SUBMIT IT?

A link to the electronic PIF grant application form will be emailed to all 1Ls and 2Ls in January. You must submit your PIF grant application by **Wednesday, March 15**. **IMPORTANT:** We know that many of you will not have your summer job nailed down by March 15. That's OK. You must submit an initial application anyway. Once you find a job, you must update your application. You may change your mind and not take the grant should your plans change, but if you do not submit the initial application by March 15, you will not be eligible for a PIF grant.

6. WHERE DO I GET A FEDERAL WORK-STUDY APPLICATION AND HOW AND WHEN DO I SUBMIT IT?

Work-Study eligibility is determined by the Law School's Financial Aid Office. They will distribute Work-Study applications early in the spring semester and will notify you fairly quickly whether or not you qualify. Note that you must be a U.S. citizen to qualify for Federal Work-Study funding.

7. WHAT DOCUMENTS MUST MY EMPLOYER SIGN?

Cornell University requires that your employer sign two documents: 1) the Letter of Intent and 2) the Work-Study Agreement. In rare instances, some employers will not sign these documents. Understand that if the documents are not signed, you cannot receive Work-Study funding; but you can still receive the PIF grant. The Office of Public Service will handle this process – you do not need to negotiate with your employer about the signing of these documents.

8. HOW MANY HOURS DO I HAVE TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE CABARET AND HOW DO I DO IT?

The Cabaret co-chairs (named below) will determine the precise number of required volunteer hours soon – but we do know it will be between 6-10 hours. Most often this is easily completed by joining and working on a Cabaret committee. Additionally, you can: audition and perform in Cabaret; donate an item to the auction; solicit an auction item from a family member, friend, or other personal connection; purchase an item during the silent or live auction. This year's Cabaret is scheduled for Friday, February 25. Be sure to attend the Cabaret informational meeting on Tuesday, November 1. Additional details will be forthcoming from Cabaret co-chairs Michael Chu (msc326@cornell.edu) and Nathaniel Stetson (nms96@cornell.edu).

9. WHAT IS THE PUBLIC INTEREST SYMPOSIUM AND HOW DO I ATTEND?

The Public Interest Symposium consists of presentations/discussions with Cornell alumni/ae who received the law school's prestigious Frank H.T. Rhodes Public Interest Law Fellowship to launch their public interest legal careers. This year's Symposium is scheduled for Friday, January 27.

10. HOW AND WHEN DO I GET PAID IF I AM RECEIVING PIF AND WORK-STUDY GRANTS?

Your \$5,000 Summer Grant will be paid to you on a bi-weekly basis through Cornell University's payroll system. Your hourly rate is \$15.63. To earn all \$5,000, you will need to work 320 hours over the course of the summer, which is approximately 40 hours per week for 8 weeks. You will receive a notice from the Office of Public Service in late March instructing you to set up an appointment with the Office of Public Service. They will assist you with the required Work-Study and payroll paperwork. You can arrange for direct deposit with the University Payroll Office so your paycheck will be deposited into your bank account.

11. CAN I WORK MORE THAN 320 HOURS AND RECEIVE A LARGER GRANT?

No. The maximum PIF/Work-Study grant is \$5,000.

12. HOW AND WHEN DO I GET PAID IF I AM RECEIVING A PIF GRANT ONLY?

Your \$1,600 PIF grant will be deposited into your University Bursar account in early June.

13. ARE THE GRANTS TAXABLE?

Yes, PIF and Work-Study grants are taxable income for IRS purposes.

14. WHAT IF MY EMPLOYER CAN PAY ME OR I RECEIVE ANOTHER TYPE OF PUBLIC INTEREST GRANT?

Because demand is high and funds are limited, if your employer is able to contribute any funding, your \$1,600 PIF grant will be reduced by that amount. You may still be able to receive work-study funding.

15. CAN I RECEIVE A SUMMER GRANT AND COURSE CREDIT FOR MY SUMMER INTERNSHIP?

No. You may not receive funding and course credit simultaneously for your summer internship. If you opt to receive course credit, you need to enroll in the Law School's Summer Externship course.