

# Deborah T. Poritz Summer Public Interest Legal Fellowship

The Deborah T. Poritz Fellowship is a paid public-interest summer program open to students who will have completed their first or second year of law school as of May 2026.

We seek applicants who demonstrate both academic achievement and commitment to public interest legal advocacy and representation.

To learn more about Legal Services in New Jersey and public interest law, visit our websites:

- [www.lsnj.org](http://www.lsnj.org)
- [www.lsnjlaw.org](http://www.lsnjlaw.org)
- [www.probononj.org](http://www.probononj.org)
- [www.njejla.org](http://www.njejla.org)



*"My fellowship was a phenomenal and transformative learning experience. I had no idea what to expect when entering law school, but my time as a Poritz Fellow helped me learn how to center my focus unto our clients, their needs and wants, and how to effectively advocate for our clients. I was able to write briefs, interact with clients, and brainstorm with attorneys on legal matters."*

Steven S. Northington, Staff Attorney  
Central Jersey Legal Services  
2023 Poritz Fellow

**Thanks for your interest in our program!**

## How to Apply

The Summer Intern application is available through your law school's placement office or can be accessed on LSNJ's website at <https://lsnj.pub/PoritzInternApp>.

Applications will be considered in the order received, and hiring decisions will continue until all positions are filled. Interested students are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

## For additional information:

Poritz Fellowship  
Legal Services of New Jersey  
100 Metroplex Drive, Suite 101  
Edison, New Jersey 08818  
(732) 572-9100  
[internships@lsnj.org](mailto:internships@lsnj.org)

## Deborah T. Poritz Public Interest Legal Fellowship Summer 2026

**Sponsored by  
Legal Services  
of New Jersey**

Since 1990, the fellowship program has been funded in major part by a grant from the IOLTA Fund of the Bar of New Jersey.

# Deborah T. Poritz Summer Public Interest Legal Fellowship

This year, Legal Services of New Jersey will sponsor paid public interest legal fellowships to rising second and third year law students.

The Poritz Fellowship program seeks to promote awareness of and commitment to careers in public interest law through rewarding summer experiences. Past fellows have become employed in New Jersey's Legal Services system as well as other nonprofit public interest organizations.

## Selection Process

As the program sponsor, Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) screens all applicants to identify those with the greatest potential and commitment to public interest work. Promising applicants will receive a preliminary interview with LSNJ and, if qualified, will be referred to participating employers for a final interview and decision.

Placements are for a 10-week period. All interns will participate in a multi-day orientation in June and a closing gathering to recap the summer and discuss public interest opportunities.

## Qualifications

The competitive fellowship program seeks applicants who have demonstrated a commitment to social justice through prior work, extracurricular school activities, and volunteer efforts. Grades, honors, and personal achievements are also important. Rising third-year law students are given a measure of priority due to a special New Jersey court rule under which students employed by Legal Services offices or other legal aid programs may be certified to appear in some state courts. Outstanding rising second-year students will receive the same consideration.

## Compensation

Summer 2026 fellows will receive weekly compensation: \$1250 for rising third-year law students, and \$1000 for rising second-year law students.

## The Fellowship Experience

Students placed in this summer program gain experience in a variety of public interest legal issues. While specific responsibilities vary with the participating employer, activities typically include client interviewing, legal and factual research, drafting legal documents, administrative agency appearances and—for students who have completed two years of law school—court appearances and more in-depth case involvement. Fellows interested in policy and research have participated in client needs assessment and other studies, helped draft pleadings on major litigation, and conducted research in education, civil rights, welfare policy, children's issues, housing, and other matters affecting people who are economically disadvantaged.

