



2023 Summer Student Legal Placement Opportunities

BC Civil Liberties Association

The BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) has openings for legal placement opportunities for the summer of 2023. Students will have the opportunity to gain valuable experience by working alongside staff lawyers and legal directors assisting in aspects of litigation, policy advocacy and communications campaigns.

The BCCLA is one of Canada's leading organizations advocating for the protection and advancement of civil liberties and human rights. The BCCLA has been actively advancing human rights and civil liberties through litigation, law reform, community-based legal advocacy, and public engagement and education for the last half century. With a mandate that includes work on police accountability, government transparency, democratic rights including freedom of expression, prisoners' rights, patients' rights, privacy rights, surveillance and national security issues, immigration detention, and criminal legal reform, we are one of the most vibrant and visible advocacy groups in Canada.

Funding

Historically, the BC Civil Liberties Association has hired law students over the summer term. These placements are made possible through federal and foundation funding. Funding is contingent on application cycles, the type and number of applicants, and a variety of other factors. Despite our best efforts, we were unable to secure funding for summer placements in 2023. While many students frequently offer to summer at the BCCLA without compensation in order to "gain experience," we oppose the illegal practice of unpaid internships and believe in people being paid a living wage for their labour.

As a result, we ask that people only contact us if they can secure a certain amount of funding from a third party (usually their law school). Recognizing how beneficial summer student placements are both for our organization and for law students, we are opening a call for law students to apply to collaborate with us this summer if they have secured external funding. In previous years, we've been able to accommodate 1-3 student placements.

The BCCLA has Living Wage Certification in Vancouver. As different funders have different amounts to offer to students, the term of the placement for successful applicants will be based on dividing the overall funding by the living wage for Vancouver (\$24.08/hour as of 2023). It is our intention to make this a meaningful placement for aspiring lawyers; we welcome students who can make a 10-12 week placement (at 35 hours a week) possible through their funding, with a tentative start date of May 2023. We estimate this requires \$8,400-\$10,100 in funding for the placement.

We realize that sometimes students need to be linked to specific deliverables to be eligible for funding. Please indicate if this is the case when submitting your materials to us.

Eligibility

- a student studying common law who has finished at least the first year of law school
- a demonstrated interest in civil liberties and human rights. Preference may be given to students with a background or interest in grassroots legal movements and mechanisms
- Funding must be confirmed prior to the start date of the placement and must be maintained throughout the duration of the placement
- Preference may be given to students located in Canada for the duration of the placement

What You Can Expect to Work On

Law students will be conducting case law and statutory legal research, reviewing legislation, drafting legal memoranda for litigation and law reform purposes, and helping in the preparation of public education materials that make the law more accessible and other projects as assigned. In past years, summer students have contributed to our law reform efforts by assisting in drafting letters to government, writing commentary and blogs for the BCCLA website, and moderating panel discussions with experts from a range of backgrounds. Litigation work for this term would likely include developing a new constitutional test case, and intervening at various courts across the country, including at the Supreme Court of Canada.

Placements at the BCCLA provide a valuable opportunity to be engaged in the work of social justice and public interest law, particularly in the areas of police accountability, criminal law, privacy rights, Indigenous rights, prisoners' rights, democratic rights, and the novel and shifting legal landscape during the pandemic.

Application Process and Deadline

Please send us a cover letter and resume to be considered for one of these placements.

We might ask applicants to forward copies of academic transcripts, writing samples, and/or references later. Please note we don't factor academic grades in the selection process; transcripts may be asked simply as a tool to take notice of students' interests and educational background.

Please send your materials in PDF format with the subject line "2023 Summer Placement" to careers@bccla.org by March 20, 2023.

We may conduct brief interviews shortly thereafter and will notify all applicants of the outcomes.

The BCCLA is committed to ensuring that equity, diversity, and inclusion are priority considerations, including in building a workplace that honours the particular experiences and expertise of communities marginalized through state violence and social oppression. The BCCLA strongly encourages law students who are Indigenous, Black, racialized, immigrants and refugees, working class, and 2SLGBTQIA+ to contact us for these placements. Students are encouraged to self-identify, should they feel comfortable doing so.

Placements are normally based at our office in Vancouver at #306-268 Keefer St, on unceded Indigenous lands belonging to the x^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil Waututh) nations.

In light of COVID-19, this position will work partially in-person, in compliance with WorkSafeBC guidelines for in-office work during the pandemic, and partially remotely. The possibility of fulfilling the placement entirely remotely is available.