

NYC LAW DEPARTMENT LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW FIELD CLINIC

In this field clinic, students will work in the Labor and Employment Law Division of the New York City Law Department (also known as the Office of the Corporation Counsel). The Law Department serves as attorney and counsel for the City of New York and City agencies in all legal matters. The Labor and Employment Law Division handles a wide variety of matters, including claims of First Amendment retaliation and other forms of retaliation; claims of gender, race, age, and disability discrimination; violations of the Equal Pay Act; violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act; claims arising under the Civil Service Law, collective bargaining agreements issues; and challenges to City agency actions under Article 78 of the New York Civil Practice Law and Rules. Attorneys within the division litigate cases brought against every City agency, as well as lawsuits brought against high ranking City officials. Attorneys practice in federal and state courts, appear before the New York State Division of Human Rights and the New York City Commission on Human Rights, and participate in proceedings at the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings. Consequently, attorneys within the division apply and hone every type of litigation skill, including legal research and writing, conducting discovery, arguing motions, negotiating settlements, and trying cases.

Students will spend 12 - 15 hours a week in the Labor and Employment Law Division at the Law Department, located at 100 Church Street in lower Manhattan. There, students will work closely with and receive close supervision from experienced attorneys on all aspects of civil litigation, including researching and drafting legal memoranda, investigating factual allegations, preparing for and observing witness depositions, and participating in court proceedings. Students may be assigned actual cases handled by the division, and will be given the responsibility for researching applicable case law, drafting motions and responsive pleadings, and, as appropriate, appearing for oral argument on their cases in state court.

In the seminar, students will learn the substantive and procedural areas of Labor and Employment law. Students will learn, discuss, and explore the practical issues that arise in civil litigation, that require good judgment, persuasive written and oral advocacy, thorough investigation, ethical considerations, and careful discretion in handling clients, witnesses and adversaries. During the seminar, students will present their individual cases to review the issues they have come across, and collaborate as a group, to evaluate the judgment calls regularly faced by attorneys during litigation.