

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COUNSEL  
COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA**

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**2024 Internship Announcement  
Positions Available for Winter/Spring 2024, Summer 2024, Fall 2024**

The County of Santa Clara's Office of the County Counsel is one of the nation's preeminent public law offices, serving as legal counsel to the County, its Board of Supervisors and elected officials, every County department and agency, and the County's various boards and commissions. The Office has widely been recognized for its excellence and commitment to justice, including through awards and recognition from the American Bar Association, the Daily Journal, the California Lawyer Magazine, the County Counsels' Association of California, and other leading legal institutions.

The Office's work covers a wide array of litigation and policy matters that significantly affect the health, safety, and well-being of the county's 1.9 million residents. The Office supports the County's efforts to protect public health and the environment, provide healthcare services, address homelessness, maintain roads and parks, ensure access to a fair criminal justice system, and protect vulnerable populations. The Office handles nearly all of the County's civil litigation, including employment, personal injury, child welfare, breach of contract, civil rights, taxation, environmental law, and social justice and impact litigation. The Office also provides all of the day-to-day legal services expected from any in-house legal team, including advice and counsel regarding emerging areas of law and transactional matters.

The Office is pleased to announce that it is now accepting internship applications for 2024. Based on their interests and the Office's needs, interns work in and across the Office's practice areas (described below) to help support the Office's work on behalf of the County and county residents. Interns will be tasked with significant substantive writing and research assignments and may have opportunities to assist in analyzing and drafting legislation. Interns also have opportunities to attend hearings and tour County facilities and will gain an unparalleled view of the complex legal issues faced by county governments and the critically important work of a public law office.

**Teams and Associated Practice Areas**

**Adult and Elder Protection:** our attorneys represent and advise the Public Administrator/Guardian in almost 1,000 conservatorship, decedent estate, and trust proceedings each year. As legal counsel for the Public Administrator/Guardian, the attorneys in this team handle trust, estate, and probate litigation and appeals, trust and estate administration, and probate and LPS conservatorship administration and assist in the drafting of legislation.

**Child and Family Protection:** our attorneys support the local child welfare system in its goals of family preservation and healing through emergency response advice and advocacy in juvenile court. Our team

was the recipient of the International Municipal Lawyers Association 2022 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award for our work to combat systemic racism in child welfare locally.

**Community Protection:** our attorneys advise County departments on routine and complex matters involving violations of the County Ordinance Code and state law. Matters include everything from illegal construction to animal hoarding. Attorneys coordinate investigations, draft memos on novel issues, and litigate in state trial and appellate courts.

**Civil Rights, Tort, and Employment Litigation:** our attorneys provide the highest quality representation whenever suits or claims are filed against the County, its officials, or its employees. The Team's docket includes a wide variety of cases, including tort, employment, civil rights, medical malpractice, and dangerous condition of public property actions. Our experienced litigators handle all phases of litigation in state and federal trial and appellate courts.

**Education Law:** our attorneys advise and represent the Santa Clara County Office of Education and certain local school districts on various legal issues to support local educational agencies in ensuring legal compliance, preserving resources, and promoting equitable treatment of students, staff, and families.

**Equal Opportunity and Employment Investigations:** our attorneys work closely with, and provide legal advice to, the Equal Opportunity Division (EOD) in investigations of alleged violations of County policies against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. The team also supports EOD in reasonable accommodation matters by providing legal advice and training regarding accommodation requirements, the interactive process, and placement issues.

**Environment and Land Use:** our attorneys provide legal advice to various County departments and agencies including the Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency and the Office of Sustainability. Our team researches novel areas of the law impacting the environment, land use, and sustainability and advises on strategies and implementation measures to respond to the evolving built and natural environment that makes up Santa Clara County.

**Finance, Government Operations, and Technology:** our attorneys provide legal advice to the Board of Supervisors, County Executive, Assessor, Clerk of the Board, Facilities and Fleet Department, Finance Agency, County Library, Procurement Department, Registrar of Voters, and Technology Services and Solutions Department to fulfill the public service mission of the County. The Team's practice is grounded in honing expertise in public law, including the Brown Act and the Public Records Act as well as specialized areas including public contracting, finance, property taxation, public works, and technology, data security, and privacy.

**Health and Hospitals:** our attorneys work on legal issues arising out of the operation of the County's three hospitals and other departments in the County health care system. Subject areas include medical records and confidentiality, consent to treatment, public health, mental health, health care for minors, managed care, emergency medical services, and clinical research.

**Human Services:** our attorneys provide advice to the County departments that provide safety net benefits and supportive services. These departments include the Office of Supportive Housing, the County department tasked with combating homelessness, and the Social Services Agency, which administers federal, state, and local benefits and operates child and adult protective services.

**Jail Reform and Custody Operations:** our attorneys work with departments such as the Sheriff's Office and Custody Health Services to help spearhead jail reform efforts, researching and analyzing evolving areas of law and analyzing and commenting on legislation.

**Labor and Employment:** our attorneys provide advice on all labor and employment matters, including employee discipline, interpretation of labor agreements, and compliance with state and federal laws. They also represent the County before the County's Personnel Board and regarding union grievances before labor arbitrators.

**Public Safety and Justice:** our attorneys provide legal advice to the County departments and agencies that make up the County's criminal justice and emergency response system. Attorneys work on legal

issues related to law enforcement, criminal adjudication, juvenile justice, jail operations, reentry services, disaster preparedness and response, and related services.

**Social Justice and Impact Litigation:** our attorneys litigate affirmative high-impact consumer protection and social justice-oriented cases, draft new legislation, and develop innovative policies and programs to advance the County’s goal of securing economic and social justice for all its residents. The team also works to advance local, state, and national public policy reform through progressive local government action, including amicus, legislative, and regulatory advocacy.

**Workers’ Compensation:** our attorneys provide legal services to the Workers’ Compensation Division of the Risk Management Department in proceedings related to workers’ compensation claims filed by County employees, helping to preserve public resources for the benefit of the broader public.

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

Santa Clara County is one of the most diverse communities in the United States, and its diversity is one of its greatest strengths. Our Office aims to reflect the communities we serve, and we believe that diversity in our Office is crucial to successfully performing the variety of work with which we are entrusted. Being able to draw on different perspectives allows us to be at the forefront of legal issues both locally and nationally. The Office of the County Counsel seeks a diverse applicant pool for every position, welcomes qualified applicants of all backgrounds, and hires based on fair and open competition.

### **Application Guidelines**

Internships are open to all law school students. Internships are unpaid, but we will work with interested applicants to facilitate public interest stipends, academic credit, or pro bono credit from their law schools if applicable. Unpaid post-bar internships are also available.

To apply, please send an email to [internships@cco.sccgov.org](mailto:internships@cco.sccgov.org) with (1) your resume, (2) a cover letter describing your interest in working with local government, any relevant experience, and listing **two or three** teams in our office that you are interested in working with, (3) the names and telephone numbers of two references, (4) a writing sample, and (5) an unofficial law school transcript.

**Deadlines:** Applications for **Winter/Spring 2024** (full and part-time) internships will be considered on a rolling basis until positions are filled, but applications are preferred to be submitted by October 20, 2023. Applications for **Summer 2024** internships (10 weeks, full-time) will be considered on a rolling basis until positions are filled. The first round of application review will begin on September 1, 2023. If positions remain following that first round of review, additional applications will be considered as they are received. Note: applicants in their first year of law school may supplement their applications with their grades as they become available—first year students will be considered for summer internships on a case-by-case, space available basis beginning December 1, 2023. Applications for **Fall 2024** internships (full and part-time) will be considered on a rolling basis until positions are filled, but applications are preferred to be submitted by March 1, 2024.

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### **About the County of Santa Clara, California**

*The County of Santa Clara serves a diverse, multi-cultural population of 1.9 million residents. With a \$7 billion annual budget, dozens of offices/departments, and over 20,000 employees, the County provides essential services to county residents, including public health protection, environmental stewardship, medical services through the County of Santa Clara Health System, child and adult protection services, homelessness prevention and solutions, roads, park services, libraries, emergency response to disasters, protection of minority communities and those under threat, access to a fair criminal justice system, and many others, particularly for those in the greatest need. The county is the most populous in Northern California.*