



Guidelines for PILI Intern & Fellow Supervisors

PILI's Law Student Intern and Graduate Fellowship Programs reflect the heart of our mission, to cultivate a lifelong commitment to public interest law and pro bono service within the Illinois legal community to expand the availability of legal services for people, families and communities in need. PILI wants each of our Interns and Fellows to have the best and most rewarding educational experience possible, while providing our partner agencies with a valuable resource to help you in achieving your mission. The following guidelines are the product of many years of evaluations and feedback from Interns, Fellows and agency supervisors. Please review these guidelines.

A. Planning for the Arrival of Interns & Fellows

1. **Plan in advance.** Have projects ready that are primarily legal in nature. The value of the Internship for law students and Fellowships for recent graduates is increased when a project or its component can be completed over the service period. Give consideration to their level of experience, the educational value of each project, the time available, and the availability of proper supervision.
2. **Get a Rule 711 license in advance.** Have the necessary forms and have the paperwork done in advance. The license could be issued even before the summer's work begins, so they can hit the ground running.

B. Assignment of Projects

1. **Explain the project assignment in detail.** In many cases, it may be preferable to have the assignments in writing.
2. **Explain how the project fits into the overall picture of the project or case.** This will give Interns and Fellows a better understanding of the impact of the work that they are doing, and a sense that they are contributing to something greater.
3. **Be specific about the work product desired.** Whether you are seeking a legal memo, a brief letter, draft pleading, etc., do not assume that the Intern/Fellow will know what you want. If possible, provide a sample document of the type you are requesting.
4. **Provide a time frame.** Be clear about how much time should be spent on a project, when the project should be completed, and what to do if time runs out.
5. **Ensure that proper supervision is in place and that the supervisor is accessible.** You may also want to suggest books or articles, sample pleadings, legal precedents from other cases, or other people at your agency who can help.
6. **Explain any reports you require.** If the Intern/Fellow is expected to provide progress reports, give details about when and to whom the reports should be given.

7. **Give clear assignments.** At the end of each meeting, make certain that the Intern/Fellow understands the assignment. Invite questions, both at that initial meeting and later.
8. **Avoid conflicts of interest.** This is an issue to be mindful of with regard to Fellows. When a project is being assigned, check for possible conflicts of interest between the Fellow's law firm and the matter. When in doubt, check with the firm, or even better, always perform the check.
9. **Meet at least weekly with Interns/Fellows to check on the status of assigned work.** This is important even if the meeting is brief. Interns/Fellows often are reluctant to bother their supervisors, so regular meetings eliminate that possible concern.
10. **Provide prompt feedback.** Evaluate the work product promptly when the Intern/Fellow has completed the project. Discuss the evaluation and invite questions. Review of the work product and constructive criticism are essential. It is important to include positive comments with negative ones. One of the most common complaints of Interns and Fellows is that they do not get enough or timely feedback on their work.
11. **Provide more formal evaluations.** After five weeks, plan meetings for a mid-point evaluation of work. At the end of the Internship/Fellowship, meet with each person to evaluate his/her work as well as to receive comments, suggestions, and criticisms about the experience.

C. Agency Experience

1. **Be sure to provide the name of the *general supervisor for all Interns/Fellows*.** This is especially important if multiple attorneys at your agency will be assigning tasks.
2. **Assign challenging work.** Assignments should be as substantive and challenging as possible. If everyone helps with phones or copying, the Intern/Fellow should do so also. However, keep in mind these people are with you to learn how to be lawyers. Give each person as much responsibility as s/he can handle in carrying out assignments with appropriate supervision.
3. **Vary the work.** Assignments should be varied so that each person is exposed to different aspects of agency work. No one should be buried in the library all summer or fail to observe some proceedings.
4. **Include the Intern/Fellow in decision-making about cases and projects.** When possible, include him/her in the decision-making process, e.g., discussion of potential matters, trial strategy, legal theories, etc.
5. **Engage the Intern/Fellow in agency matters.** This can include those matters on which s/he is not working, including things like client meetings, trials, and settlement conferences. Also, invite him/her to attend agency board, staff, and committee meetings as appropriate. Explain the agency's functions, e.g., intake, fundraising, personnel, so s/he will have a more complete picture of your agency.
6. **Keep in touch after the term ends.** Keep each Intern/Fellow informed of developments in the matters s/he worked on, even after the summer is over. These people potentially are your future pro bono attorneys, volunteers, board members, fundraisers, and even potential future staff members.

D. Work Place Situations

1. **Provide the Intern/Fellow with adequate work space.** Ideally this should be close to the other attorneys at the agency.
2. **Provide adequate support facilities similar to those provided for staff attorneys.** This includes, clerical support, access to library and/or online research resources, telephone, etc.
3. **Establish and help maintain staff relationships.** Foster a relationship between the Intern/Fellow and the others who work at the agency, both legal and non-legal.

E. PILI Programs and Events

1. **Encourage participation in PILI programming.** PILI organizes a weekly lunchtime Educational Seminars for all area Interns and Fellows to expose them to a wide spectrum of the public interest law sector. PILI also organizes several networking and social events for Interns and Fellows during the summer. Attendance at the Educational Seminar Series programs should be encouraged and is counted towards hour requirements.
2. **Invite all summer interns and fellows.** PILI also welcomes all public interest law student interns and recent graduates who are not affiliated with PILI's Internship or Fellowship Programs to attend our summer programming.
3. **Complete PILI evaluations.** PILI administers two service tracking forms and a final evaluation to all PILI Interns and Fellows as well as a supervisor evaluation to all supervisors. PILI relies heavily on this information to improve the Internship & Fellowship Programs and to provide required information to our funders. We therefore we require that every Intern, Fellow and supervisor submit this information.

F. General Suggestions

1. **Be conscious of the Intern's/Fellow's knowledge and time limitations.** Keep in mind that Fellows are studying for the bar exam. In making assignments, take into consideration the time needed to attend bar review course sessions and study for the exam.
2. **Provide any necessary client cultural sensitivity training.** Supervisors should keep in mind that not all Interns and Fellows are aware of, or responsive to, the cultural and demographic diversity of the population served by the agency. Some training or shadowing may be needed to demonstrate effective communication within the client's cultural context.
3. **Contact PILI.** If you are concerned about the work product, attitude or behavior of one of your Interns or Fellows, please contact PILI staff immediately.

Additional information for supervisors, including the calendar for the PILI Summer Educational Series can be found on the supervisor webpage at, <http://pili.org/resources-for-supervisors>.

We hope that you and your law student Intern(s) and/or graduate Fellow(s) have a terrific experience through PILI. Please do not hesitate to contact Katie Pieper, the PILI Education & Outreach Manager, with any questions or comments, at 312-832-5128 or kpieper@pili.org.