

PI/PS Day: Frequently Asked Questions

*****The dates in this document are tentative. Please refer to the email you will receive in mid December from OneJustice to verify the specific dates.***

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GETTING STARTED

How do I begin using the PI/PS Day Online System?

Once you have received an email containing your username and password, you should start first deciding where you want to apply by searching the PI/PS Day participating organizations by going to www.OneJustice.org and clicking on “PI/PS Students Login Here.” You will be asked to provide your PI/PS Day username and password to enter the PI/PS Day online system. If you do not know your PI/PS Day username and/or password, click “forgot password” on the log-in page. If you are new to the system or would like more information about how to use it, please read the email you will receive around December 15th, entitled “PI/PS Day Student Instructions.” This email should be the first one you will receive from OneJustice; it will also contain your username and password. Please contact OneJustice if you do not receive this email.

Once you have read the instructions, you may begin researching participating employers and opportunities. There are many organizations attending, and many are hiring law students for summer, semester and permanent positions!

How do I know if an organization is interviewing at PI/PS Day?

Organizations will be participating in formal interviews (all day, morning only or afternoon only) or Meet the Advocates, or both. If an organization is interviewing, it will be listed under the “Formal Interviews” tab, and if an organization is attending Meet the Advocates, it will be listed under the “Meet the Advocates” tab. A list of ALL employers can be found under the “Employers” tab – those that have an “I” in the column marked “On Campus” (referring to on campus at UC Hastings on February 4th) are holding Formal Interviews, and those marked with an asterisk are participating in Meet the Advocates. Keep in mind that many employers are participating in both.

Helpful hint: Some of the organizations attending Meet the Advocates are hiring as well. So don't forget to research employers that are not interviewing at PI/PS Day!

APPLYING FOR PI/PS DAY INTERVIEWS

When can I apply?

You may begin applying for interviews around January 3, 2011 at 12:00pm. You will then have until around January 20 at NOON PST to submit applications through the online system. To receive an interview at PI/PS Day, you must submit your applications online. Late applications will not be accepted.

Information about how to upload application materials and how to submit applications for interviews **using the online system can be found in the email entitled “PI/PS Day,”** as well as on the system's homepage.

How should I decide where to apply?

Begin by thinking about the type of job you would like to pursue. Ask yourself:

What areas of the law are appealing? For instance, do you want to explore children's rights? Environmental law? Criminal defense? What classes interest you the most?

If you are not sure which area to focus on, ask yourself:

What have you liked or disliked from your past work experiences and extracurricular activities? What issues do you like to read about? What volunteer work do you gravitate towards? What classes grabbed you in college?

The summer is a great time to try something out. Remember that sometimes subjects seem dull in class, but are actually quite exciting when applied in the real world. Explore and you may very well find fulfilling work you are passionate about.

Also start thinking about skills that you want to develop. Ask yourself:

Do you want a lot of client contact? Do you want to hone your research and writing skills? Would you like to be involved in litigation and trial work, in policy analysis and legislation, in community outreach and education? Do you want to see an immediate impact from the work that you do, or are you willing to work towards long-term change?

Some organizations can pay interns over the summer, but many cannot. Ask yourself:

Is volunteer work financially feasible?

Organizations from all over California and from other states recruit at PI/PS Day. Ask yourself:

Can I work outside the Bay Area?

Once you have considered what you want from your summer job, visit www.OneJustice.org to see which organizations are attending PI/PS Day. From there, go to the PI/PS Day site to search organizations by clicking on "PI/PS Students Login Here."

Before applying for formal interviews, consider scheduling an appointment with your CSO. CSO staff are available to answer questions about PI/PS Day or specific organizations and agencies, to review resumes and cover letters, and to brainstorm about career options and long-term goals -- and how best to meet them through a summer job and other experiences. If you have not yet met with anyone in your CSO, perhaps now is the time!

What application materials should I submit?

To apply for ANY available position, you must upload a resume, plus whatever other documents that specific employer has requested. If they request a cover letter, please make sure it is a tailored cover letter (addressed to the particular organization).

Helpful hint: Be sure to clearly label each document that you upload into the system. If you are applying to several different organizations, be sure that each cover letter indicates the correct employer. This will make the application process go much more smoothly (and will avoid sending an employer the wrong cover letter!).

How do I upload transcripts?

To upload unofficial transcripts, you can request a transcript from your school, paste it into Word, and upload it as you would other materials. To make things easier, you may also simply create an unofficial grade sheet using Word, and upload this. Please make sure it is a maximum of 200KB.

What if I am a 1L and don't have a transcript yet?

1L students who are **yet to have access to transcripts at the time of application** are not required to submit transcripts to employers. OneJustice will ensure that all employers are aware that many 1L students do not have access to transcripts at the time of application. However, if an employer requests a transcript, please be sure to follow-up with the employer by providing it once you do have a transcript available.

Once I have submitted an application, may I withdraw my submission?

You may withdraw any submitted applications up until late January. Please refer to the email you will receive in mid December for specific dates. Once you have submitted an application to an employer, a "Withdraw" option will appear. You will then be able to withdraw the application you submitted by clicking on this tab.

Will employers be able to see applications before the deadline?

No. Employers will not receive any application materials that have been submitted until after the submission deadline. For example, if you submit an application and then later realize there is a typo in your cover letter, you can cancel that submission and resubmit a new cover letter (up until the submission deadline in late January).

Is there any advantage to applying early?

Not really. Employers will receive all applications at the same time, after the submission deadline. However, it never hurts to get them in early, especially if you run into any problems uploading or submitting your application. Remember, no late applications will be accepted!

What should I do if I have problems uploading or submitting my application materials?

If you are having technical difficulties with the online system, click on the "HELP" tab located at the top of each page. Technical support is available 24 hours. If you need more help, please contact OneJustice at pipsday@OneJustice.org (available 9am – 5pm).

PI/PS DAY INTERVIEWS: SELECTION, SCHEDULING, ALTERNATES AND OPEN SLOTS

How are interviews granted?

Employers will screen applications and select whom they would like to interview. You will find out if you have been selected for an interview starting February 4, 2011.

You will then have until around January 30, 2012 at 3pm to cancel any interviews, if necessary. If you do not cancel an interview, you will be expected to attend that interview.

Will I be able to schedule my own interviews?

The system schedules the formal interviews automatically. As such, please be sure to be available for the entire day; you may not choose interview times. Please keep in mind that some schedules may change during the cancellation and alternate period (January 30th and 31st). Your final schedule will be posted by 5:00PM on February 1st. All students should review their confirmed schedule on that day by logging on to the PI/PS Day site.

How long are interviews at PI/PS Day?

Each interview at PI/PS Day is 25 minutes long. The interviews will start at 9:00AM and run until 5:15PM. There is a 5 minute break between each interview to allow you time to get to your next interview.

If I am not selected for an interview, is there any other way to receive an interview at PI/PS Day?

There are two ways students may receive interviews with organizations despite not being selected:

1. Every employer will select 3 alternates, in addition to the standard selections for interviews. If you are marked as an alternate for an interview, your status for this employer will appear as **Alternate** (as opposed to **pre-select** or **not selected**). On February 1st, e-mails will be sent out to students who were selected by an alternate for **employers with vacant interview slots**. Being selected as an alternate DOES NOT guarantee an interview with that employer. If a slot opens up within an employer's schedule by whom you were marked as an alternate, PI/PS Staff will contact you directly via e-mail. If you are not contacted by OneJustice, the employer does not have an open interview slot.
2. Remaining open interview slots are available on a first-come, first-served basis at PI/PS Day. Students can sign up for these open slots only in-person at PI/PS Day; these slots cannot be filled online. Being selected as an alternate grants NO priority during the open registration on the morning of PI/PS Day. More information about this process will be sent to you via e-mail prior to PI/PS Day.

MEET THE ADVOCATES

What should I expect to get out of the Meet the Advocates sessions?

Meet the Advocates (“MTA”) enables students to meet representatives of organizations unable to formally interview students at all or able to formally interview only a limited number of students. Attorneys from different organizations and agencies are seated at small tables, and students are invited to gather around to talk. Organization representatives often have literature or cards; be sure to collect these for future reference. Some students have found this informal arrangement intimidating. It may be necessary to be assertive in order to make yourself known or heard by an attorney. Please do not be rude to other participants, but you should be persistent. It will be well worth the effort.

Meet the Advocates contacts will not necessarily result in paid positions, but they often produce good volunteer opportunities. In addition, they expose you to new ideas and can help you to develop your career plans and goals. These sessions are a first step in networking, in learning about a wide range of opportunities and in introducing yourself to the public interest community. These contacts often produce unexpected and positive results, either in the short-run or further down the line. For instance, students considering applying for post-graduate fellowships often use this opportunity to establish relationships with agencies the students can pair with for the fellowship process.

You should be aware that on rare occasions organizations plan to attend and then are unable to send a staff member to the Meet the Advocates sessions. The conference organizers make every attempt to prevent last minute no-shows, but you should expect last minute schedule changes. If an organization does cancel, you can still contact it and make other arrangements to talk.

Do I need to sign up to attend Meet the Advocates?

No. Students who wish to attend Meet the Advocates do not need to pre-register or submit any application materials. To meet with these employers, simply come to PI/PS Day! Remember, Meet the Advocates runs from 9:30AM to 12:30PM.

Helpful hint: Bring a copy of your resume, writing sample and references to Meet the Advocates. If organizations are hiring law students, it could save you a stamp!

Do some organizations attending Meet the Advocates have available positions?

Yes. Some organizations prefer to attend Meet the Advocates because they can meet with a larger number of students at PI/PS Day, even if they plan to hire law students for summer, semester or permanent positions. Other organizations may not have known their hiring needs at the time of the PI/PS Day registration deadline.

PI/PS DAY PREPARATION AND ATTIRE

What should I wear?

It is strongly recommended that people wear business attire. Although you will see students in everything from suits to jeans, it is always better to err on the side of dressing up too much rather than too little. Keep in mind that this is a professional job fair, and you should dress appropriately.

What should I bring with me?

Always carry extra copies of your resume, list of references and writing sample. A briefcase or pack is a good idea. In addition to holding your resume, reference letters and writing sample, it gives you a place to store the material you pick up from the organizations, and you can keep your lunch in it if you want.

How can I present myself to an organization in the best possible light?

Public interest and government attorneys say they prefer students who have made an effort to familiarize themselves with the work and objectives of the organization, who are able to demonstrate a commitment to public service (usually by past work, community involvement and/or volunteer experience related to the law) and who communicate enthusiasm and warmth. These qualities make a strong impression and should come across in your cover letter and in any other correspondence or personal contact you have with an organization, including your interview -- during PI/PS Day or in any other context. In addition to having a positive attitude, you should determine whether an organization focuses on policy analysis or provides direct legal services to clients, so that you know which skills will be of most interest to the prospective employer. Few organizations have specific eligibility requirements, although public defender and district attorney offices may prefer or require that you have taken Evidence and Criminal Procedure. Please note that federal agencies generally require that employees be United States citizens.

How can I best prepare for an interview?

Prepare as carefully as possible for PI/PS day interviews. Review the organizations that have registered to attend. Visit their websites. Talk to students who have worked there in the past. Review student evaluations available in your CSO. Use Westlaw or LEXIS to familiarize yourself with cases in which the organizations have been involved. Formal interviews might well involve a discussion of substantive law, rather than just an exchange of social pleasantries or even a generalized conversation about social justice. Also, the legal dailies, the *San Francisco Recorder* and the *Daily Journal*, often carry articles about public service organizations.

How do I handle the issue of paid versus volunteer work?

Sometimes organizations are not specific about whether they can offer paid positions. This can put students on the spot -- if you hold out for money, will you lose the job to someone willing to volunteer? If you offer to volunteer, are you unnecessarily waiving the possibility of a salary? This requires a judgment call in each situation. Be sure to read the organization's profile carefully to see

exactly what is being offered. At the same time, assess whether you are really able to volunteer. If volunteering will create a financial hardship, be clear that only a paid or work-study position is an option for the summer.

Do not offer to volunteer right at the outset of an interview if it appears that a paid position may be available. You can always offer to volunteer later in the interview. If the topic of volunteering does not come up in the formal interview or meeting, and you do not receive an offer, call the organization and say something to this effect: “I am still very interested in working with you. If I did not receive an offer because of your finances, rather than my qualifications, would it be possible for me to volunteer?” Although there is some risk, this strategy gives you a “second chance” with the organization.

Please also note that some organizations require students who work during the summer to continue working for them during the fall semester. If an organization implies this when you meet with them, please be sure to clarify the situation so as to avoid any confusion later.

PI/PS DAY FOLLOW-UP

What about contacting an organization after the event?

Don't hesitate to follow up on interviews or Meet the Advocates interactions, either with a general thank you or with more specific ideas about possible summer or school-year arrangements. This can be through a letter, telephone call or e-mail message. A written note is a more permanent reminder, but an e-mail may be more expeditious.

SAMPLE NETWORKING QUESTIONS

- How did you choose to pursue this practice area?
- What are your primary job responsibilities?
- Can you tell me about one of your most meaningful cases?
- What experience did you have to get your job?
- How long have you worked here?
- What is your own background and experience?
- What is a typical work day like?
- How long is your work day?
- What is the atmosphere/culture like in your workplace?
- How much variety is there in your work?
- How much training/supervision do or did you receive?
- How much client contact do you have?
- How much contact and what kinds of interactions do you have with individuals or groups outside the office or organization?
- Does your job require that you travel?
- What do you like/dislike most about your work?
- What are the toughest problems and decisions you handle?
- What do you wish you had known about your position/the field before you started?
- What type of professional and personal skills does it take to succeed at this type of work?
- What is the size and makeup of your organization?

- What is a typical starting salary for someone with my experience?
- What is the salary ceiling for an experienced lawyer?
- What do you see as the major issues/ trends in the field today?
- What books or journals would you recommend that I read?
- Which professional associations should I join?
- Do you recommend that I enroll in any particular classes (clinical or otherwise)?
- What opportunities for advancement are there in this organization or in the field?
- What would be a typical next career move for someone in your position?
- What recommendations do you have for me regarding a job search strategy?
- What other people do you recommend that I talk with? May I tell them that you referred me to them?

Note: Many of these sample questions were taken directly from the website of the Harvard Law School Office of Public Interest Advising. See

<http://www.law.harvard.edu/current/careers/opia/planning/career-exploration/networking-&-informational-interviewing.html>