

PATHWAYS TO CAREERS IN LAW:

A Short Guide to Financial Aid Resources & Anticipated Earnings

I. Financing Your Legal Education

1. *The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required to apply for federal student loans:*

- To apply go to fafsa.edu.gov
- The FAFSA goes live for the new academic year on October 1st
- Use the University of the Pacific school code when applying: 001329

2. *There are a number of funding sources available help make a legal education affordable:*

- **Institutional Scholarships and Grants** – Funds provided from the school based on merit and/or need. Scholarship funds available for both incoming and continuing students.
- **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan** – Loan funds provided to the student by the U.S. Department of Education. Repayment begins six months after student ceases to be a student on at least a half-time basis. Interest accrues while the student is in school.
- **Federal Graduate PLUS Loan** - Loan funds provided to the student by the U.S. Department of Education. Repayment begins six months after student ceases to be a student on at least a half-time basis. Interest accrues while the student is in school. This federal loan program allows graduate students with no adverse credit history to apply for up to their Cost of Attendance each year, less any financial aid
- **Private Loan** – for those students who do not qualify for federal aid or prefer to take out non-government loans. Can pay for cost of education less any financial aid. Private loans usually require the applicant to be creditworthy or have a co-signer. Interest is accruing while in school.
- **Federal Work-Study** – A program that provides part-time employment to students. This is a need-based program.

3. Here is other helpful information and resources for your consideration as you think about pursuing a legal education and how to finance it:

- For students in graduate or professional programs, like law school, parental income and assets are not considered in determining eligibility for Federal Student Aid Programs.
- Cal Grants, Federal Pell Grants, and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants do not exist at the graduate school level.
- Student loans and grants will provide enough funding to cover tuition plus a modest living expense.
- Visit our website at www.mcgeorge.edu/future-students/costs-and-aid/ for more information on tuition costs and financial aid.
- Other useful web sites:
 - Studentloans.gov
 - Finaid.org

4. Contact us at finaid@pacific.edu or 916-739-7158 if you have questions about financial aid or need counseling.

II. Sample of Career Paths and Anticipated Earnings

1. **GOVERNMENT**: *There are many career opportunities for law school graduates in federal, municipal and state government. Below is an example:*

Lobbyist: One who conducts activities aimed at influencing or swaying public official and especially members of a legislative body on legislation.

- In California the salary ranges are \$96,000- \$164,000; when a candidate has a JD, the low end of the salary increases to approximately \$114,000 (salary.com)
2. **CRIMINAL LAW**: *There are several areas for law graduates to practice the law of crimes and their punishments.*

District Attorney: a lawyer who represents a judicial district (county, state, federal) against defendants of crimes. This is technically a government job.

- In Miami-Dade County in Florida, salaries vary depending on your experience level; Attorney 1 approximately \$75,000; Attorney 2 approximately \$115,000 (county website)
- In Orange County in Florida: range of \$65,000-\$186,800 with midpoint of \$104,000 (county website)
- In California, generally, Deputy District Attorney salaries range from \$59,469 to \$180,059. (indeed.com)
- In Colorado, generally, Deputy District Attorney salaries range from \$55,054 to \$166,069 (indeed.com)

Public Defender: a lawyer whose duty is defend persons accused of crimes who are unable to pay for legal representation. This is technically a government job.

- In Sacramento County, Public Defender salaries range from \$80,457 to \$148,599 (paysa.com)
- In Colorado, generally, Public Defender salaries range from \$78,542 to \$129,668 (paysa.com)

Federal Public Defender: a lawyer who represents defendants accused of federal crimes. This is technically a government job.

- In New York City, the salary range is \$49,000 - \$187,000 for Assistant Federal Public Defenders (when you include the FPD it increases significantly) (comparably.com)
 - In New City the salary range for Federal Public Defenders is \$70,000-\$164,000 (justice.gov)
3. **CIVIL LAW:** Civil law refers to the system concerned with private relations between citizens. For example, marriage and property ownership. You may practice general civil law or practice in a specialized area.

General Civil Attorney: A civil lawyer is hired by a client to pursue or defend a *civil lawsuit in court*. Civil law suits can include matters of money, property, etc.

Landlord/Tenant Attorney: Landlord/Tenant law governs the rental of commercial and residential properties. Landlord/Tenant lawyers may represent landlords or tenants in such disputes

- Salary ranges for a general civil attorney in Fresno, CA (roberthalf.com/salary-guide/legal):
 - First-Year Associate: \$54,000-\$118,000; \$64,800 midpoint
 - 2-3 Years' Experience: \$69,000-\$150,000; \$83,000 midpoint
 - 4-9 Years' Experience: \$78,600-\$182,000; \$100,000 midpoint
 - 10+ Years' Experience: \$98,600-\$205,800; \$119,600 midpoint
- The below data is for a general civil attorney in Sacramento and is not specific to a landlord/tenant attorney (roberthalf.com/salary-guide/legal)
 - First-Year Associate: \$62,800-\$136,000; \$74,700 midpoint
 - 2-3 Years' Experience: \$79,500-\$172,700; \$95,600 midpoint
 - 4-9 Years' Experience: \$90,600-\$210,000; \$115,000 midpoint
 - 10+ Years' Experience: \$113,600-\$237,000; \$137,800 midpoint