

PLACEMENT NAME:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

About the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC):

NYSDEC is one of the largest administrative agencies charged with the executive authority to regulate and enforce the numerous federal and state environmental laws within New York State. NYSDEC's regulatory authority covers a multitude of program areas, including, but not limited to: climate change and regional greenhouse gas initiative, solid and hazardous waste, energy, lands and forests, petroleum and chemical bulk storage, air, water, land use and access, brownfield and superfund site clean-up. These program areas are covered by divisions within NYSDEC. NYSDEC is also the licensing agency for various hunting, fishing and trapping permits throughout New York State.

The main office for NYSDEC is Central Office, which is located in Albany. The Office of General Counsel (OGC) in Central Office is comprised of a General Counsel, two Deputy Counsel and 7 Bureau Chiefs. Attorneys in each bureau handle legal matters for specific program areas (i.e. air, water, spills, etc...). In addition to the Central Office, there are nine (9) regional offices located throughout New York State. A Regional Director is in charge of a particular region and reports directly to the Commissioner's designee. Each of the divisions within NYSDEC is also represented in the regions as well. Each region has a Regional Attorney who supervises Assistant Regional Attorneys and support staff, including paralegals and secretaries.

Staff for NYSDEC is responsible for issuing environmental permits, conducting rulemakings, responding to requests under the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), drafting technical guidance documents, and enforcing the New York State Environmental Conservation Law and accompanying regulations. Specifically, attorneys in Central Office, Regional Attorneys and Assistant Regional Attorneys, provide assistance with the above, as well as conducting legal and policy analysis. Drafting legislation and rulemaking are primarily functions undertaken through Central Office. Central Office often provides support and assistance to the regions, which carry out the primary permitting responsibilities and undertake much of the enforcement. Attorneys in the regions and in Central Office consult each other on many legal issues.

Additional information about the NYSDEC can be found on our website at

www.dec.ny.gov.

Internship Program:

The Intern Coordinators act in a supervisory capacity for all of the legal interns and provide administrative assistance for the program. Legal interns are assigned to and work on specific projects with a NYSDEC attorney in one or more areas of environmental law. Legal interns receive feedback from their assigned attorney on a continuing basis. The Intern Coordinators also monitor the programs and work of the interns.

Legal interns provide support to NYSDEC attorneys in many different ways. Among other things, legal interns organize discovery documents for enforcement cases and permit hearings, draft legal papers such as orders on consent, notice of hearing and complaints, attend Pre-Hearing Conferences in enforcement cases, assist NYSDEC attorneys in negotiation sessions, attend internal meetings and meetings with external entities, generate letters to respondents, and draft memoranda of law (about 60% of the time). Legal interns also conduct extensive legal research using online resources and assorted treatises. Summer legal interns attend various site visits germane to associated cases or projects they have worked on during their time at the NYSDEC.

The number of legal internships varies depending on funding, space available, potential workload and other factors. Legal internships are available for varied durations at several different times during the year, but typically for the fall and spring semesters for 12 hours per week, as well as 37.5 hours per week during the summer. Legal internships during the fall and spring semesters can be employed either for credit (field placement) or work study, if funding is available. Summer internships may be paid if the student is eligible for work study and funding is available, but there is also an option to work for credit. If you are interested in a summer internship for credit, please let us know as soon as possible because there would be a need for coordination with your law school to determine if that is possible. Volunteers are also welcome to apply.

Program Requirements:

We do give preference to second year students, students with a demonstrated interest in environmental law and students with a technical or scientific background. However, all applications will be reviewed and considered.

How to Apply:

Applications will be accepted by mail, fax and email. Please send your resume and a writing sample (5 pages or less) to the Intern Coordinators. A list of references and a recent transcript may also be requested upon further inquiry.

Application Due Dates:

For the fall semester (starting in late August)-by May 1st

For the spring semester (starting in mid January)-by November 1st

For the summer (10 weeks starting at the end of May)-by March 1st