State Attorney
SUSAN S. LOPEZ
Thirteenth Judicial Circuit
419 N. Pierce Street
Tampa, Florida 33602-4022
(813) 272-5400

Internship/Volunteer Information

The State Attorney for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit is a constitutional officer who is elected every four years. The State Attorney’s Office prosecutes crimes that occur throughout Hillsborough County. The staff of approximately 350 includes approximately 130 attorneys, 10 investigators, and a dedicated support staff.

Our office is committed to making our county a safer place to live, work, and raise a family.

Eligibility
Applicants are eligible for the State Attorney’s Legal Internship Program if they meet the following criteria:

- Currently enrolled in a college, university, or law school
- Able and willing to work at least 15-20 hours/week during the Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. work week

Certified Legal Internships

Certified Legal Interns (CLIs) are authorized by the Florida Bar, Chapter 11 (Rules Governing the Law School Practice Program), to practice law under the supervision of a licensed attorney. CLIs must complete all requirements of the Florida Bar prior to being certified and beginning their internship. CLIs are recruited through accredited law schools. The prerequisite courses designated by the law school for the prosecution clinic are essential. CLIs are placed in our County Court or Juvenile Divisions. County Court Divisions conduct bench trials and jury trials of misdemeanor and traffic offenses. Juvenile Divisions conduct bench trials of misdemeanor and felony level offenses. CLIs will be assigned to work with particular attorneys and will learn the skills necessary to handle a criminal case from start to finish. These skills include preparation of discovery and responses to pre-trial motions, arguing motions in court, handling arraignment dockets, and prosecuting non-jury trials. CLIs are strongly encouraged to seek out opportunities to prosecute cases before a jury. Court hearings are held on different days of the week and parttime CLIs do not get the benefit of handling all aspects of a case.
Once accepted as a CLI, the office must have the Florida Supreme Court approval letter that lists an attorney in the office as their supervisor. This information will be provided to the student. CLIs should then coordinate with their law school. Once we receive the approval letter, a Notice of Consent and Approval will be signed by the State Attorney and filed with the Clerk allowing CLIs to appear on behalf of the State for a specific time period. Students may begin their internship but cannot appear on behalf of the state until the Notice of Consent and Approval is finalized.

**Law School Students - Legal Interns/(Extern for credit)**

Legal Interns are those who have not been certified by the Florida Bar. Legal Interns cannot speak on the record or practice law. Legal Interns are assigned to an attorney or division and will shadow that attorney to learn the legal process. They will be given work assignments, such as legal research, reviewing jail calls, and assisting in the preparation of discovery documents. These assignments will be reviewed by the assigned attorney. If placement is for course credit, they are expected to complete the minimum hours set by the law school for the awarding of credit. Those not seeking credit should be available a minimum of two days per week. Legal Interns may request their preferred assignment in our Felony Divisions, and we will make efforts to accommodate their request. Legal Interns may also request a specialty division such as Major Crimes, Economic Crimes, Special Victim Unit, or our treatment courts.

**Undergraduate Students**

We have limited placement opportunities for undergraduate students. Undergraduate student interns will assist as needed. Tasks may include photocopying, running files to court, clerical work and observing court. Undergraduate interns are usually assigned to a Felony Division.

**Communications Intern**

The State Attorney’s Office is seeking a motivated, energetic, and highly organized individual as a communications intern. We are looking for student interns with a strong academic background who are interested in communications, the law, government policy, and the interaction between a government agency and the local community. The intern will work directly with our communications team as we pitch news stories, handle breaking news in court, study fascinating legal issues, engage with the community, and more. Interns may interact with the community on behalf of the office in a professional capacity. Communications, marketing, journalism, graphic design, and public relations students—graduate or undergraduate—may apply. Applicants will be expected to complete a 10- to 20-hour workweek, with flexibility around your school schedule. See some of the work we’ve done on our website:
https://www.sao13th.com/newsroom/

**Requirements:**

- Currently enrolled in a related BS or master’s program at a university or college
- Proficient understanding of various social networks
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, AP writing style preferred
- Communications and marketing majors in junior or senior year of college or graduate school preferred
Duties may include:

Public Relations/Marketing
- Networking with media outlets and news reporters, assisting with arranging media interviews and courtroom coverage for criminal cases
- In-person coordination of press conferences and trial/verdict news coverage
- Drafting and editing copy for press releases, newsletters, and media materials
- Tracking and clipping press coverage, building and maintaining media lists
- Assisting the team in updating and creating marketing collateral such as brochures, flyers, digital media, etc.

Social Media
- Assisting in writing social media short-form posts, blog articles, and other content copy
- Organizing user-generated content from social media channels and dedicated hashtags or keywords.
- Assisting with creation of social media graphics

Public Affairs
- Reviewing cases and assisting with legal analysis for explanation to news media and the public
- Planning messaging and outreach related to important cutting-edge criminal justice reform efforts
- Researching legislative and regulatory issues
- Helping to plan, attending, and/or participating in community meetings or events
- Observing court proceedings and trials in person
- Assisting with communication and social media campaigns

By the end of a successful internship, the intern will receive a letter of recommendation for future employment or graduate school.

**Information Technology Intern**

The SAO – IT Internship will be based on the systems operations group.

**Qualifications/Experience**
- Be responsible, flexible, hardworking, ethical, and committed to the office
- Sophomore level or above pursuing a bachelor’s degree in the Information Technology field
- Prior technology experience preferred
- Strong organizational skills with ability to multi-task and support multiple priorities
- Candidate should be a self-motivated, independent, detail oriented, and responsible team player.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
Computer Skills:
- Experience in setting-up, configuring, maintaining and troubleshooting;
- Familiar with Windows, OS X, iOS, operating systems, Microsoft Office and applicable hardware
- Helpdesk operations with excellent problem solving and communication skills
- Good time management skills.

For those interested in a programming group internship, the programming requirements would be similar but would require at least some sort of programming class experience and the understanding of logic programming. Our office uses C#, .net, asp.net, java and bootstrap as programming languages.

Application Process:
- Complete the Application Packet on the office website https://www.sao13th.com/about/employment/. Email the Application Packet with a resume and cover letter indicating if you are requesting to volunteer, intern/extern for credit or a Certified Legal Internship to Employment@sao13th.com.
- Application Deadlines: Spring Semester: November 1, Summer Semester: March 15, Fall Semester: June 1
- We do not offer any type of payment or stipend for interns/externs.
- Non-credit interns need to provide proof of good academic standing.
- Interns are responsible for ensuring all education credit requirements are met, applied for, and followed.
- Outside employment should not conflict or overlap with your time at our office.
- Our office is located at the County Courthouse, 419 N. Pierce Street, 2nd floor. You will be responsible for securing your own parking. There are a number of private lots that cost $3.00 per day and up located within a few blocks of our office: City of Tampa Parking and 717 Parking own a variety of lots in downtown Tampa.
- Please provide your division preference when submitting your application.

Placement Procedures & Orientation
Candidates will be notified of their acceptance once background checks are completed and paperwork is submitted. The specific number of internships available shall be predetermined each semester based on office need. Interns shall be asked, as part of the application process, to rank their top two potential office placement choices.

- Availability: Please indicate your availability to work in the office and your requested start date and end date on your application. Our office is open from 8:30am-5pm, Monday – Friday. If you do not know your schedule, you can give this information at a later date. See Intern/Volunteer descriptions for availability requirements.

- IMPORTANT: All prospective interns will be required to undergo criminal background investigations to include FCIC/NCIC, driving history and must be fingerprinted. In
accordance with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement guidelines and the FBI CJIS security policy, any reported felony conviction or any misdemeanor conviction occurring within three years of application will be immediate grounds for denial of access to CJIS, and the applicant will not be considered for an internship. Any other charges will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. A form will be provided to you prior to your start date for fingerprinting. Fingerprints from other agencies are not accepted.

Questions:
Employment@sao13th.com