

Career Opportunities in Indian Law

A practical job search guide for ILPC and NALSA students

To: ILPC and NALSA students; MSU Faculty and Staff
From: Prof. Wenona T. Singel, Director, Indigenous Law and Policy Center
Date: September 22, 2026
Re: Planning and preparing for law student and postgraduate employment in Indian law

Students seeking summer or post-graduate positions in Indian law should know that the field is not a single specialty or a small collection of jobs. Tribal Nations are governments, courts, regulators, prosecutors, public defenders, employers, economic enterprises, health care providers, and natural resource managers. Employers need lawyers across all of these functions. Many opportunities exist, but students need to prepare early, monitor openings consistently, and develop evidence of their interest and skills.

This memo draws on 681 announcements submitted through the ILPC Google Form for posting on Turtle Talk between February 18, 2025, and September 18, 2026. **Appendix A, Employer Directory by Type**, organizes the 256 identifiable employers associated with 680 substantive submissions and illustrates the range of Tribal governments, courts, law firms, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and other institutions recruiting through Turtle Talk. A conservative screen based on job titles identified 440 submissions expressly seeking an attorney, counsel, prosecutor, public defender, judge, justice, or law clerk. That screen excludes many positions requiring legal education or involving substantial legal work, including fellowships, legal internships, litigation and court positions, and RFPs for legal services.

The 2025–26 form submissions included at least 26 distinct summer opportunities for law students from 24 employers. **Appendix B** supplements those submissions with earlier Turtle Talk announcements, identifying 52 summer opportunities from 47 employers in total.

Because employers choose whether to submit positions, these figures document recent demand visible to ILPC and Turtle Talk; they don't comprehensively document the national labor market for Indian law jobs.

Indian law includes many kinds of legal practice

The announcements show that students don't have to choose between Indian law and litigation, environmental law, criminal law, family law, business law, administrative law, or public service. They can pursue many combinations of these interests while working for Tribes or on legal matters affecting Tribal sovereignty and Indian Country.

Indian law reinforces foundational and bar tested subjects

Indian law is a distinct field, but studying it requires you to apply doctrines that appear throughout the law school curriculum and on the bar. Indian law problems regularly involve constitutional structure, federal and state jurisdiction, civil procedure, criminal law and procedure, property, family law, administrative law, contracts and business regulation, taxation, and professional responsibility. The field brings those subjects together in disputes involving overlapping federal, state, and Tribal authority.

An Indian law course strengthens your ability to identify controlling law, analyze jurisdiction, interpret statutes and treaties, work through sovereign immunity and preemption questions, and explain how legal rules operate across governmental systems. Those analytical skills are useful whether you ultimately practice Indian law or another subject.

Your existing interests can also provide an entry point into the field. A student interested in litigation, prosecution or defense, child welfare, environmental law, business transactions, public benefits, health law, or government service can pursue that interest in work involving Tribes. If you're still deciding whether Indian law fits your plans, take Federal Indian Law early enough to explore the field before summer employment and upper level course choices narrow.

Employment Setting	Sample Employers, Attorney Roles, and Areas of Focus
Tribal governments	General counsel, assistant general counsel, Tribal attorney, legislative counsel, policy counsel, and natural resources counsel
Tribal courts	Judges, justices, law clerks, court attorneys, court administrators, and student placements
Criminal justice	Prosecutors, chief prosecutors, public defenders, and victim services attorneys
Children and families	ICWA, child welfare, family services, and juvenile and protective services attorneys
Firms	Litigation, regulatory, transactional, gaming, and general Tribal representation
Legal services and advocacy	NARF, NCAI, USET Sovereignty Protection Fund, California Indian Legal Services, New Mexico Legal Aid, Alaska Legal Services, and DNA-People's Legal Services, Michigan Indian Legal Services
Federal and state government	U.S. Attorney Offices; DOJ's Office of Tribal Justice, Environment and Natural Resources Division, and Civil Rights Division; HHS legal work involving IHS; DOI Solicitor's office; EPA; USDA; Treasury; Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; legislative staff positions; the White House domestic policy council and intergovernmental affairs; and state Tribal affairs and compact positions

Environment and resources	Earthjustice and positions involving water, energy, conservation, treaty resources, and environmental justice
Tribal enterprises	Gaming, economic development, corporate finance, commercial lending, bond issuances, compliance, contracts, employment, and corporate counsel

Employers who contact the ILPC to post job announcements on Turtle Talk are located across the country

Appendix A, Employer Directory by Type, identifies the employers that submitted job announcements or legal services RFPs and RFQs to the ILPC between February 2025 and September 2026. Use it to explore the range of employers in the field and to identify organizations you may want to research or contact, even when they aren't currently advertising a position.

The announcements show that Indian law employment is geographically dispersed, with substantial concentrations in Indian Country and in major government, nonprofit, and law firm markets.

Employer Locations in Turtle Talk Job Announcements

322 distinct employer location points from 669 job announcement submissions

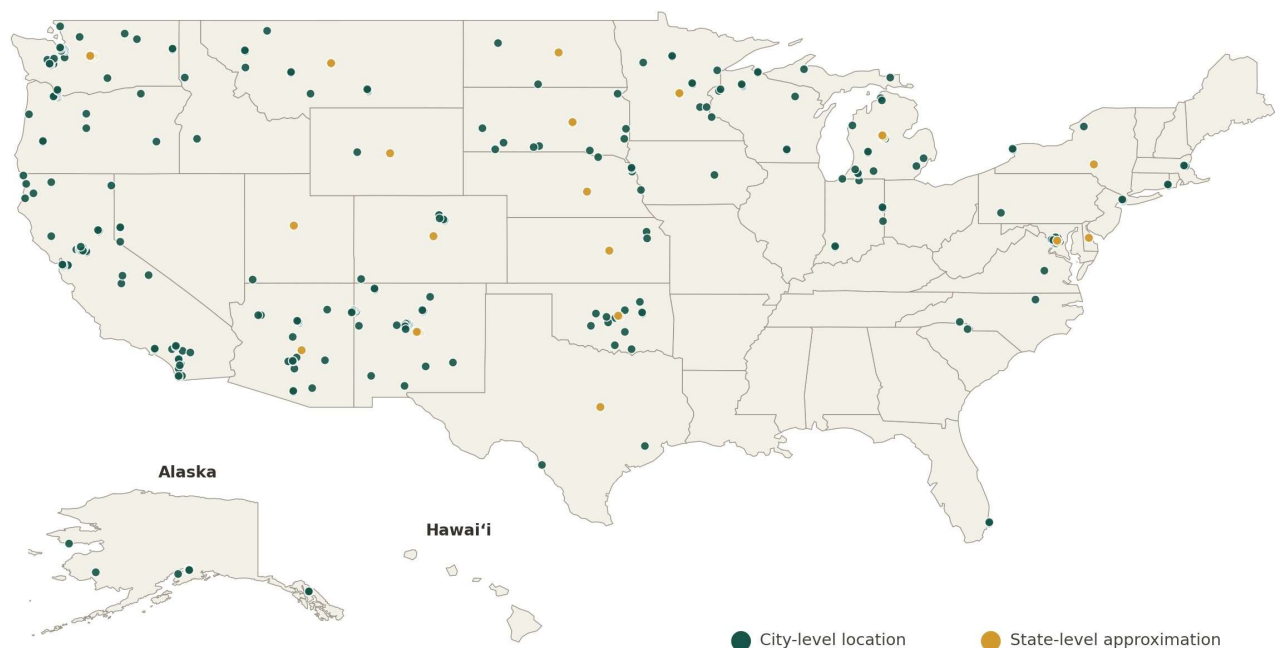


Figure 1. Employer locations represented in Turtle Talk job announcements from February 2025 and September 2026. Each dot represents a distinct employer at a submitted location; overlapping locations are slightly offset. Eighty remote-only or otherwise unmappable submissions are not plotted. Legal services RFPs and RFQs are excluded.

Law student opportunities are varied

The student opportunities came from Tribal governments and courts, Indian law firms, Native advocacy organizations, DOJ's Office of Tribal Justice, USET (United South and Eastern Tribes) Sovereignty Protection Fund, Earthjustice, Tribal enterprises, and Indigenous environmental organizations. They included summer associate positions, law clerkships, semester internships and externships, Tribal court placements, federal volunteer positions, and policy and environmental work. Opportunities for summer clerkships are also available at large law firms with Indian law practice groups, including at Dentons and Greenberg Traurig.

Appendix B, Summer Employment Opportunities for Law Students, provides examples of positions available to law students, including their locations, work arrangements, qualifications, and application deadlines. Use it to identify employers, compare hiring requirements, and plan when to take relevant courses and begin applying.

Compensation varies considerably by employer, geography, experience, licensing status, and whether a position is permanent, temporary, or contractual. The following ranges are drawn from compensation stated in Turtle Talk submissions during 2026, supplemented by recent official employer postings. They represent observed advertised compensation rather than a comprehensive salary survey or a guarantee of compensation for comparable positions.

Position or career stage	Observed advertised compensation	Examples and qualifications reflected in postings
Law student internships, public interest placements, and Tribal placements	Unpaid or academic credit to approximately \$37/hour	Some DOJ and Tribal court positions were unpaid or offered academic credit. Paid opportunities included approximately \$23, \$25, \$28, \$35.20, and \$36.86 per hour. Earthjustice confirms that its summer law clerks receive a stipend, although the amount may vary by posting.
Law firm summer associates and summer clerks	Approximately \$36–\$49/hour, \$7,200–\$10,000 per month, or as much as \$2,500 per week	Patterson Real Bird & Rasmussen advertised \$36–\$49 per hour; Hobbs Straus advertised \$3,600–\$4,000 semi-monthly; and Sonosky Chambers advertised \$2,500 per week. Hobbs Straus described its position as an approximately ten-week, full-time program for enrolled law students.
Postgraduate fellowships	Approximately \$65,000–\$110,250 annually	Recent examples included an Environmental Law Institute fellowship at \$65,000–\$70,000, the NARF Tribal Water Institute Law Fellowship at \$100,000, and the Berkey Williams Indian Law Fellowship at \$110,250.
Staff attorneys at legal services and public interest organizations	Approximately \$59,000–\$120,000 in many postings; some geographically adjusted positions reached approximately \$163,000	DNA-People's Legal Services advertised \$59,328–\$78,795; New Mexico Legal Aid advertised \$63,376–\$100,547; California Indian Legal Services advertised approximately \$77,000–\$94,000; and several organizations advertised \$85,000–\$120,000. A current Alaska Legal Services position offers

		\$108,373–\$162,558, illustrating the effect of geography and employer pay structures.
Tribal government attorneys, associate counsel, and prosecutors	Approximately \$76,000–\$160,000	Examples included Navajo Nation attorney levels beginning around \$76,000–\$83,000; an associate Tribal attorney at \$85,000; Tribal prosecutors ranging from approximately \$83,000 to \$169,000; and a Choctaw Nation Staff Attorney II position at \$140,000–\$160,000. The Navajo Nation judiciary currently lists staff attorney positions at \$82,956–\$111,478.
Private Indian law firm associates	Approximately \$90,000–\$180,000	Recent postings included associate positions at \$90,000–\$120,000, \$105,000–\$180,000, \$110,000–\$155,000, and \$160,000–\$180,000 for an attorney with three to five years of experience.
Midlevel or specialized private practice attorneys	Approximately \$140,000–\$220,000; some transactional positions reached \$300,000	Examples included a Tribal law and civil litigation associate at \$140,000–\$180,000, a litigation attorney at \$150,000–\$220,000, and transactional Indian law positions advertised at \$175,000–\$300,000.
Senior counsel, supervising attorneys, general counsel, and attorneys general	Approximately \$115,000–\$250,000; exceptional leadership positions may exceed that range	Supervising and directing attorney postings generally ranged from approximately \$115,000 to \$185,000. Senior counsel, assistant general counsel, reservation attorney, attorney general, and general counsel positions commonly ranged from approximately \$129,000 to \$250,000. One Tribal general counsel search began compensation discussions at \$300,000. A current Sonosky posting states that compensation begins at approximately \$190,000 for an experienced position.
Federal government attorneys	Approximately \$75,000–\$164,000 before applicable locality adjustments	Recent HHS and DOJ postings covered approximately this range. A DOJ Office of Tribal Justice Attorney Advisor position was advertised at GS-13 through GS-15. DOJ explains that federal attorney compensation depends on grade, experience, responsibility, and geographic locality.
Tribal judges and justices	Approximately \$58,000–\$119,000 for some associate judges and \$118,000–\$209,000 for some full-time chief judges; compensation is frequently negotiable or contractual	Recent postings included associate judge positions at \$58,000–\$87,000 and \$109,000–\$119,000, chief judge positions at \$118,000–\$178,000 and \$161,000–\$171,000, and a Tribal judge position paying approximately \$209,000. One associate judge position was advertised at approximately \$233,000. Many judicial postings instead stated “depending on experience,” provided a per-docket rate, or contemplated an individually negotiated contract.
Paralegals and legal assistants	Approximately \$49,000–\$100,000, or roughly \$27–\$41 per hour in many postings	Compensation varied particularly widely. Recent examples included \$49,000–\$70,000, \$55,000–\$80,000, \$60,000–\$80,000, \$80,000–\$100,000, and hourly ranges reaching approximately \$41. Some

		entry-level Tribal legal assistant positions paid substantially less.
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Begin the summer search earlier than you think

Some employers recruit more than a year in advance. A 2026 summer associate position appeared in May 2025 with an August 2025 deadline. Several additional 2026 positions appeared in August and September 2025. A 2027 summer associate position appeared in April 2026 with an August 2026 deadline. Waiting until January can mean missing structured programs at firms and larger organizations.

Period	Recommended action
April through August	Begin watching for firms and structured summer programs for the following year.
August through October	Treat this as a major application period for the next summer.
November through February	Continue checking Tribal government, court, nonprofit, firm, and federal opportunities.
February through April	Watch for smaller employers and Tribal institutions that hire closer to summer.
Throughout the year	Look for semester internships, externships, fellowships, and positions listed as open until filled.

Use the Indigenous Law Certificate to build a professional pathway

The Indigenous Law Certificate gives structure to your preparation for practice. Rather than presenting an employer with a collection of unrelated courses, you can show sustained work across doctrine, related fields, research and writing, and supervised legal experience. Because relatively few law schools award a certificate in this field, it can help make your preparation set you apart from other candidates. The credential is most persuasive when you can explain what you did to earn it and how that work prepared you for the employer's needs.

MSU Law's Indigenous law curriculum includes Federal Law and Indian Tribes; Tribal Law; Gaming Law; Tribal Economic Development; American Indian Children & the Law; Global Perspectives on Indigenous Peoples; Native American Natural Resources Law; and Indian Law Clinic I and II. Students can also participate in the National Native American Law Students Association Moot Court Competition for course credit and pursue additional subjects through externships and directed study. Offerings vary by year and may expand in response to student interest, so plan your schedule across several semesters in consultation with the ILPC.

The certificate requires:

- At least 15 credits, consisting of 10 to 14 credits of required coursework and 5 to 7 credits of electives.
- Federal Law and Indian Tribes (LAW 635B), plus at least two additional approved Indigenous law courses.
- Indian Law Clinic I (LAW 631J) or an approved externship with a Tribal government, a government unit focused on Indian law issues, or a nonprofit or nongovernmental organization involved in the field.
- At least two approved electives. The listed options connect Indian law with trusts and estates, administrative law, family law, federal jurisdiction, criminal procedure, environmental law, and natural resources law.
- A substantial paper on an Indigenous law issue that meets the law school's Upper Level Writing Requirement standard. The paper may be completed in an approved certificate course, through a directed study, or in another course with the required approvals.

Students become eligible for admission to the certificate program after successfully completing the first year required courses and receive the certificate at graduation after applying and completing all requirements.

A practical sequence

1L year. Complete the required first year curriculum, attend ILPC and NALSA programs, explore practice settings, and plan your upper level schedule. After completing the first year requirements, apply to the certificate program and discuss your plan with ILPC.

2L year. Take Federal Law and Indian Tribes as early as the schedule permits. Begin the additional required courses and select electives that support your interests. Start planning the research paper early enough to develop a strong topic and writing sample. Apply for summer positions well before the spring semester.

Summer after 1L or 2L. Seek work with a Tribal government or court, an Indian law firm, a Native advocacy organization, or a government office working with Tribal Nations. If you want a placement to satisfy the certificate's externship requirement, obtain the necessary approvals before relying on it for certificate credit.

Final year. Complete the clinic or approved externship, the substantial paper, and any remaining required or elective courses. Review your certificate progress early enough to correct a missing requirement before graduation.

Use the certificate in your job search

The certificate can strengthen an application, but it shouldn't carry the entire argument. On your resume and in interviews, connect each component to evidence of readiness: coursework

demonstrates doctrinal preparation; the clinic or externship provides concrete experience and professional references; and the research paper can demonstrate sustained analysis and may become a writing sample. Where appropriate, identify the certificate as expected, list the most relevant courses, and explain how your work relates to the employer's practice.

The certificate also helps you respond to postings that require or prefer Indian law coursework. Completing Federal Law and Indian Tribes early can make you eligible for opportunities before graduation, while the additional courses, experiential work, and paper help distinguish a demonstrated commitment from a general statement of interest.

The certificate description summarized here is dated May 25, 2023. Course offerings and approval procedures may change, so confirm your individual plan with ILPC and the appropriate law school administrators.

Take relevant courses early enough to use them

Several employers expressly required or preferred Indian law coursework. NARF and Patterson Real Bird & Rasmussen required Native American law coursework before their clerkships. Pechanga required Federal Indian Law. Rincon Tribal Court preferred Federal Indian Law or American Indian Law. Morongo required Native American law coursework. One Indigenous conservation internship required Federal Indian Law or relevant experience and preferred additional coursework in Tribal law, environmental law, administrative law, natural resources, or constitutional law.

Planning implication: If you hope to pursue a 2L summer position, take Federal Indian Law early enough to satisfy application or start date requirements. Waiting until your final year may foreclose opportunities.

Build evidence of your commitment and readiness

Employers repeatedly requested strong research, writing, analytical, and communication skills. Many also wanted applicants who understood Tribal sovereignty, confidentiality, government-to-government relationships, and the governmental character of Tribal Nations. A cover letter stating that you're interested in Indian law is less persuasive than a record showing how you developed that interest.

- Take Federal Indian Law, Tribal Law, the Indian Law Clinic, and related courses that fit your interests.
- Develop a polished legal writing sample and be prepared to explain the assignment and your analysis.
- Use a seminar paper, directed study, journal note, moot court problem, or clinic project to deepen your knowledge.
- Seek experience with a Tribal government, Tribal court, Native organization, or office that regularly works with Tribal Nations.
- Participate meaningfully in ILPC and NALSA programming and professional events.

- Learn about each prospective employer and, when applicable, the Nation or community it serves before applying.
- Use transferable experience to enter the field

Not every graduate begins in a position labeled Indian law. The submissions show that Indian law employers value experience in criminal prosecution and defense, child welfare, civil litigation, judicial clerkships, environmental and administrative law, contracts and business transactions, legislative drafting, natural resources, and government service. A first job in one of these areas can be a deliberate step toward Indian law practice.

At the same time, don't assume that every position requires years of specialized experience. The submissions included positions for new graduates, fellowships for recent graduates, and roles accepting lawyers with approximately one year of experience. Some postings treated clinic, trial practice, journal, or moot court experience as useful preparation when an applicant lacked prior practice experience. Apply when you meet the actual minimum qualifications, even if you don't satisfy every preferred qualification.

For 3Ls and Recent Graduates: Read licensing requirements carefully

Many positions require bar membership, but not always admission in the employer's state on the first day. Some accept membership in any U.S. jurisdiction, allow admission by reciprocity, or permit a new employee to obtain admission within a stated period. Some Tribal court roles refer to state or Tribal bar membership. Don't reject an out-of-state opportunity without reading the posting carefully. Conversely, treat a specifically stated state license requirement as a genuine minimum qualification.

Make Turtle Talk part of your search routine

The Turtle Talk blog run by Professors Matthew Fletcher at Michigan Law School and Wenona Singel at MSU posts opportunities received directly by the ILPC from employers seeking law students and lawyers interested in Indian law. Checking it consistently provides access to positions that may not appear through general law school recruiting channels. Of the 681 submissions, approximately 282 were listed as open until filled. That phrase should prompt an early application; it doesn't mean that applicants can safely wait.

1. Subscribe. Follow Turtle Talk's job announcements and check the site each week. Email subscriptions are available on the Turtle Talk website.

2. Confirm the details. Open the employer's official announcement and verify the deadline, required materials, compensation, location, and licensing rules.

3. Track opportunities. Maintain a spreadsheet or calendar with deadlines, application status, contacts, and follow-up dates. Many employers don't post summer clerkship opportunities, so we encourage students to contact employers that interest them to inquire about summer opportunities even if no job announcement is posted.

4. Keep materials ready. Maintain current versions of your resume, transcript, reference list, writing sample, and an adaptable cover letter framework.

5. Apply promptly. Submit open-until-filled applications early and don't wait for a formal closing date.

6. Research the employer. Understand its governmental, legal, or organizational role and tailor the application accordingly.

7. Use professional relationships appropriately. Seek information and advice from ILPC faculty, alumni, and practitioners, while following the employer's official application process.

A checklist for the coming year

- ☐ Identify two or three Indian law practice settings you want to explore.
- ☐ Plan when you'll take Federal Indian Law and related courses.
- ☐ Select and revise a legal writing sample.
- ☐ Prepare a resume that makes relevant coursework and experience visible.
- ☐ Meet with ILPC faculty or career services to discuss your search strategy.
- ☐ Identify funding options for public interest or unpaid summer work.
- ☐ Begin monitoring next-summer positions during the preceding spring or early summer.
- ☐ Subscribe to Turtle Talk and review new employment postings consistently.

Final advice

Indian law employment rewards both preparation and sustained attention. Take the foundational courses, build transferable legal skills, learn how Tribal governments and institutions operate, and begin looking well before you expect to apply. The positions submitted to ILPC show that employers are actively seeking students and graduates with this preparation. Your task is to make sure you see the opportunities in time and can demonstrate that you're ready for them.

Appendix A Employer Directory by Type

This appendix identifies every employer associated with a substantive submission to the ILPC Google Form for a job announcement or legal services RFP or RFQ posting between February 18, 2025 and September 18, 2026. It includes 256 identifiable employers across 680 submissions.

Distinct courts, legal departments, enterprises, and other institutional units remain separately listed when the submission identified them as the employer. Categories describe the employer rather than the particular position advertised.

Tribal Nations Governments and Departments (106)

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	Aleut Community of St. Paul Island
Bay Mills Indian Community	Blackfeet Tribe
Blackfeet Tribe Legal Department	Catawba Indian Nation
Cedarville Rancheria	Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma	Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Office of the Tribal Prosecutor
Colville Confederated Tribes	Comanche Nation
Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation	Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs	Eastern Shoshone Tribe Office of the Attorney General
Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
Forest County Potawatomi	Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
Gila River Indian Community	Gila River Indian Community Office of the Prosecutor
Gila River Indian Community Protective Services Office	Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake	Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe
Hoopa Valley Tribe	Hoopa Valley Tribe Office of Tribal Attorney
Hopi Board of Education	Hopi Tribe
Hualapai Tribe	Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas	Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
Little River Band of Ottawa Indians	Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Makah Tribe	Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
Mescalero Apache Tribe	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Office of Solicitor General	Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe (submitted through AstroHire)	Muscogee Nation Office of the Attorney General

Navajo Nation Department of Justice	Navajo Nation Office of Legislative Counsel
Nez Perce Tribe	Nez Perce Tribe-Law & Justice Department
Nisqually Indian Tribe	Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi
Office of Navajo Public Defender	Oglala Sioux Tribe
Omaha Tribe of Nebraska	Pascua Yaqui Tribe
Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians	Pechanga Band of Indians
Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians	Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe	Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
Prairie Island Indian Community	Pueblo of Isleta
Pueblo of Laguna	Pueblo of Pojoaque
Pueblo of Zuni	Puyallup Tribe of Indians
Quartz Valley Indian Reservation	Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
Rosebud Sioux Tribe	Rosebud Sioux Tribe Prosecutors Office
Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa	Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan
Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe	San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe
Santee Sioux Nation of Nebraska	Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians	Seminole Tribe of Florida
Shivwits Band Council	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate
Southern Ute Indian Tribe	Squaxin Island Tribe
St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
Suquamish Tribe	Suquamish Tribe Office of Tribal Attorney
Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation	Table Mountain Rancheria Tribal Government
The Chickasaw Nation	The Muscogee Nation
Tohono O'odham Legislative Branch	Tohono O'odham Nation
Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation	Tulalip Tribes
Ute Mountain Ute	Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
White Earth Nation	Wichita and Affiliated Tribes
Wilton Rancheria	Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
Yankton Sioux Tribe	Yavapai-Apache Nation
Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation	Yurok Tribe

Tribal Courts and Judicial Institutions (15)

Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Judicial Branch	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribal Court
Intertribal Court of Southern California	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Court
Lower Sioux Tribal Court	Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court
Pueblo de San Ildefonso Tribal Court	Rincon Tribal Court
Sac and Fox Nation Judicial Branch	San Carlos Apache Tribal Court
Seminole Tribal Court	Three Affiliated Tribes Fort Berthold District Court
Tulalip Tribal Court	Wilton Rancheria Tribal Court
Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska Tribal Court	

Tribal Enterprises Authorities and Corporations (14)

Colville Tribal Federal Corporation	Eighth Generation
ilani Casino Resort	Kewa Pueblo Health Corporations
Lummi Indian Business Council	Oglala Lakota Housing Authority
Prairie Band Casino & Resort	Red Cliff Chippewa Housing Authority
Seneca Gaming Authority	Seneca Gaming Corporation
Seneca Resorts & Casinos	Sisseton Wahpeton Housing Authority
Waseyabek	Yavapai-Apache Nation Sand & Rock

Intertribal Organizations and Tribal Consortia (10)

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium	Association of Village Council Presidents
Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission	Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission
Intertribal Agriculture Council	National American Indian Court Judges Association
National Indian Health Board	Ten Tribes Partnership
United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund	Upper Columbia United Tribes

Law Firms and Private Legal Practices (29)

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	Berkey Williams LLP
Cedar Tree Native Law LLP	Cultural Heritage Partners, PLLC
Dale & Van Horn Law, PLLC	Dragonfly Law Group, P.C.
Echo Hawk & Olsen, PLLC	Galanda Broadman, PLLC
Gust Rosenfeld, P.L.C.	Hobbs Straus Dean & Walker LLP
Jacobson, Magnuson, Anderson & Halloran, P.C. d/b/a The Jacobson Law Group	Kanji & Katzen, P.L.L.C.
Kaplan Kirsch	Kazhe Law Group, PC
Keegan Richardson Solimon & West LLP	Maier Pfeffer Kim Geary & Cohen LLP
Miller Nash LLP	Mshkawzi Law
Patterson Real Bird & Rasmussen LLP	Peebles Bergin Schulte & Robinson, LLP
Rosette, LLP	Rothstein Donatelli
Setter Roche Smith & Shellenberger LLP	Skenandore Wilson LLP
Sonosky Chambers Sachse Endreson & Perry LLP	Sonosky Chambers Sachse Miller & Monkman LLP
The Circle Law Group, P.C.	Vicente LLP
Zwilling Wulkan PLC	

Native Advocacy Legal Services and Community Organizations (30)

Alaska Legal Services Corporation	Alaska Native Justice Center
Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (AKNWRC)	American Indian Law Center
Anishinabe Legal Services	Association on American Indian Affairs
California Indian Legal Services	California Tribal Families Coalition
Cook Inlet Tribal Council	Dakota Plains Legal Services
Diné C.A.R.E.	DNA-People's Legal Services
Indian Law Resource Center	Indigenous Conservation Council (ICC)
Indigenous Justice	Legal Aid Services of Oregon
Michigan Statewide Advocacy Services	Mille Lacs Band Member Legal Services
Montana Legal Services	National Indian Child Welfare Association
Native American Disability Law Center	Native American Rights Fund
Nevada Legal Services	New Mexico Legal Aid
Northwest Justice Project	Sage Indigenous Law Center

Sage Legal Center	Tribal Defenders Office for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Tulalip Office of Civil Legal Aid	Water Protector Legal Collective

Public Interest Environmental and Other Nonprofit Organizations (21)

ACLU of Michigan	ACLU of New Mexico
Advocates for the West	Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Battered Women's Justice Project	Bird Conservancy of the Rockies
Casey Family Programs; Indian Child & Family Well-Being Program	Earthjustice
Environmental Law Institute	Grand Canyon Trust
Keeping Families Connected Minnesota	National Wildlife Federation
New Mexico Environmental Law Center	NM Center on Law and Poverty
Public Health Law Center	Save California Salmon
Solidaire Network	The Wilderness Society
The World's First Global Democracy	Washington State Budget and Policy Center
Western Environmental Law Center	

Federal Government and Federal Institutions (4)

Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis	U.S. Department of Justice Office of Tribal Justice
U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, Office of the General Counsel, Public Health Division, Indian Health Service Branch	US District Court for the Western District of Washington

State Local and Other Public Sector Employers (14)

Alaska Court System	Alaska State Commission for Human Rights
California Department of Justice	California Public Utilities Commission
Colorado Office of the Child's Representative	House of Delegates
Judicial Council of California	King County Executive Office
King County's Department of Natural Resources and Parks	Montana Office of the State Public Defender
New Mexico Legislative Council Service	Office of the President
Washington State Department of Revenue	Washington State Environmental & Land Use Hearing Office

Colleges Universities and Academic Programs (9)

Emmett Environmental Law & Policy Clinic, Harvard Law School	Mitchell Hamline School of Law
Seattle University School of Law	The Evergreen State College
University of Colorado Law School	University of New Mexico School of Law
University of Oklahoma College of Law	University of Tulsa College of Law
Washburn University School of Law	

Other Private Sector Employers and Individuals (3)

Bristol Associates, Inc.	Plante Moran Realpoint
Rebecca Nagle	

Appendix B

Summer Employment Opportunities for Law Students

Turtle Talk / ILPC summer law student opportunities

This appendix includes positions expressly described as summer legal employment for law students in ILPC submissions, official program pages, or past Turtle Talk job announcements. Always contact the employer to confirm deadlines for the current hiring cycle; deadlines noted below may be from prior years.

American Civil Liberties Union of Montana

Position	Summer Legal Intern
Location	Missoula, Montana
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting. The announcement described litigation work with the ACLU of Montana legal team on current civil-rights matters.
Application deadline	Review began November 30 of posted year; no final deadline stated.

Big Fire Law & Policy Group LLP

Position	Summer Associate
Location	Omaha, Nebraska; Winnebago, Nebraska; or Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting. Summer associates were to work directly with a partner, select a desired practice group, and gain experience with Tribal, federal, and state matters.
Application deadline	January 31 following posted year

California Tribal Families Coalition

Position	Law Student Clerk
Location	Remote
Work arrangement	Remote
Qualifications	2L or 3L law student; 1Ls considered with relevant lived experience, work, or training in Indian law or child welfare. Sought students with lived experience in Tribal communities and/or demonstrated interest in federal Indian law, Tribal law, or child welfare.
Application deadline	Priority deadline: April 15 of year of summer clerkship; rolling applications thereafter.

Earthjustice

Position	Summer Law Clerks
Location	United States
Work arrangement	Not stated
Qualifications	Enrolled in a U.S. law school through fall semester preceding the summer clerkship (not graduating before December before summer clerkship); available for 10 weeks in summer; must work from the United States.
Application deadline	Labor Day

Environmental Law Institute

Position	Beveridge & Diamond Diversity Law Clerk
Location	Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Law student from a traditionally underrepresented perspective, including historically marginalized racial groups and/or economically disadvantaged communities. The clerk supported environmental law and policy research, analysis, drafting, and publications.
Application deadline	January 23 of year of summer clerkship

Fredericks Peebles & Morgan LLP

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Louisville, Colorado; Omaha, Nebraska; or Sacramento, California
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Second-year student enrolled at an ABA-accredited law school; Tribal law and federal Indian law experience or coursework; excellent analytical, research, and communication skills; able to work independently and on a team in a fast-paced environment.
Application deadline	September 30 of year preceding summer clerkship

Godfrey & Kahn

Position	Summer Associate Program
Location	Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, or Appleton, Wisconsin
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	2L student. Tribal affiliation and experience representing Indian Tribes were described as desirable.

Application deadline	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
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Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Peshawbestown, Michigan
Work arrangement	Not stated
Qualifications	Completed 2L year by time of summer clerkship; completed Native American law coursework by the clerkship start; intent to practice Tribal law and federal Indian law; familiarity with Tribal communities and cultures.
Application deadline	Open until filled.

Hobbs Straus Dean & Walker

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Not stated
Qualifications	Strong academic performance; superior research and writing skills; strong communication skills; commitment to federal Indian law.
Application deadline	Until filled.

Human Rights Watch

Position	U.S. Program Legal Internship
Location	New York, New York
Work arrangement	Preferably full-time for at least eight weeks; some part-time arrangements might have been possible.
Qualifications	Current law students and recent graduates were especially encouraged; well-organized, self-motivated, and reliable; interest in human and civil rights highly desirable; Microsoft Office and internet skills required.
Application deadline	Apply immediately; no calendar date stated in the Turtle Talk posting.

Indian Law Resource Center

Position	Terrance A. Sidley and John D.B. Lewis Summer Legal Fellowships
Location	Helena, Montana, and Washington, D.C.

Work arrangement	Hybrid / multi-office; fellows must spend time in both offices and attend the in-person summer board/staff meeting; travel and office dates are flexible.
Qualifications	Completed 1L or 2L year by summer of clerkship year; excellent legal research and writing; experience writing legal memoranda. Preferred: federal Indian law and/or international human rights coursework, Spanish or Portuguese proficiency, and familiarity with Indigenous communities and issues.
Application deadline	Rolling while the announcement remains posted; rising 3Ls no later than November 30, and rising 2Ls no later than February 15 of the year of the summer fellowship.

Indigenous Conservation Council of the Chesapeake Bay

Position	Summer Legal Intern
Location	Mostly remote, with travel to Tribal homelands; East Coast preference
Work arrangement	Hybrid
Qualifications	Rising 2L or 3L at an ABA-accredited law school; Federal Indian Law coursework or relevant Tribal Nation experience; strong research and writing; experience with Indigenous Peoples or Tribal Nations; demonstrated interest in Tribal sovereignty and governance. Preferred: related coursework, Tribal government experience, familiarity with treaty/land/jurisdiction issues, or policy/regulatory experience.
Application deadline	April 10 of year of clerkship.

Intertribal Court of Southern California

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Valley Center, California
Work arrangement	Not stated
Qualifications	At least one year of J.D. coursework at a school accredited by the ABA or State Bar of California; demonstrated interest in federal Indian law and Tribal law preferred.
Application deadline	Open until filled.

Keegan Richardson Solimon & West LLP

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, New Mexico
Work arrangement	In-person
Qualifications	Current 1L or 2L law student; strong writing and analytical skills; demonstrated interest in federal Indian law.
Application deadline	Rolling basis.

King County, Washington

Position	Tribal Partnerships Intern
Location	King County, WA and remote
Work arrangement	Hybrid; part-time during the school year and full-time during summer for an intern eligible to remain in the position through December
Qualifications	Open to undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in environmental studies, Indigenous studies, public policy, or a related field. The announcement did not expressly identify J.D. students, so interested law students should confirm that their program qualifies as a related field.
Application deadline	July 7 of the summer preceding a school-year internship

Little River Band of Ottawa Indians

Position	Summer Legal Intern
Location	Manistee, Michigan
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting. Interns assisted the Unified Legal Department with projects supporting its in-house representation of the Tribal government and enterprises.
Application deadline	Rolling review beginning December 1 of year prior to summer clerkship until filled.

Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Position	Summer Law Clerks
Location	Harbor Springs / Petoskey, Michigan
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Law student status was indicated by the clerkship. Applicants were asked to state GPA in the cover letter; transcripts and writing samples could be requested. Three placements were announced in the Prosecutor's Office, Tribal Court, and Domestic Violence Court.
Application deadline	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.

Maier Pfeffer Kim Geary & Cohen LLP

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Oakland, California
Work arrangement	Not stated

Qualifications	Second year student at an ABA-accredited law school; Tribal and federal Indian law experience or coursework strongly preferred; excellent analytical, research, and communication skills; able to work independently and on a team in a fast-paced environment.
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Application deadline	October 31 of year prior to clerkship
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Michigan Governor's Office of Legal Counsel

Position	Summer Clerkship Program
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Location	Lansing, Michigan
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Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
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Qualifications	Completed first or second year of law school; exceptional legal research, writing, and communication skills; able to work in a fast-paced environment and respond quickly to varied legal issues.
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Application deadline	February 22 of year of clerkship
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Michigan Indian Legal Services

Position	Summer Legal Interns/Externs
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Location	Traverse City and Southwest Michigan
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Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting; one position was based at Tribal offices in Southwest Michigan.
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Qualifications	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting. Three placements were described: on-site services to Tribal members in Southwest Michigan; domestic violence and human trafficking projects in Traverse City; and direct client assistance in Traverse City.
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Application deadline	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
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Morongo Band of Mission Indians

Position	Legal Intern — Tribal Law
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Location	Banning, California
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Work arrangement	Not stated
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Qualifications	2L or 3L in fall prior to summer clerkship; Native American law coursework; experience drafting legal memoranda; excellent research, analytical, written, and oral communication skills.
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Application deadline	Open until filled.
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Mshkawzi Law

Position	Law Clerk — Spring/Summer
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Location	California; Michigan; Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Not stated; submission noted remote interaction among offices, clients, and staff.
Qualifications	Second- or third-year law student; excellent academic credentials and research/writing skills; some familiarity with federal Indian law; self-directed and able to work in a dynamic environment; able to build client relationships and travel for client matters.
Application deadline	December 31 of year prior to clerkship

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund

Position	Summer Internships
Location	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Law student eligibility was indicated by Turtle Talk's law student jobs classification; no additional qualifications were reproduced in the post.
Application deadline	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.

National Congress of American Indians

Position	Summer Legal Internship — Domestic Violence Focus
Location	Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Completed at least one year of law school before the internship; available at least 16 hours per week for at least six weeks. Work included legal research, memoranda, VAWA implementation, domestic violence resource mapping, meetings, and webinars.
Application deadline	Rolling until selected; applicants were encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

National Indian Gaming Commission

Position	Summer Legal Intern
Location	Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting. The Office of General Counsel internship involved legal research and writing and review of Indian-gaming matters.
Application deadline	January 4 of year of summer clerkship

Native American Rights Fund

Position	Summer Clerkships
Location	Anchorage, Alaska; Boulder, Colorado; Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	In-person / office-based; applicants identify their preferred NARF office.
Qualifications	Completed 2L year by summer of clerkship; Native American law coursework completed by the clerkship start; experience drafting legal memoranda; excellent research and written/oral communication skills. Desired: prior employment, natural resources coursework, and familiarity with Tribal communities and cultures.
Application deadline	Priority deadline: August 14 of year prior to summer clerkship; rolling through September 25, 2026 or until filled.

Navajo Nation Department of Justice

Position	Funded Summer Law Clerk / Intern
Location	Navajo Nation; specific office location not stated in the Turtle Talk posting
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Enrolled in an ABA-accredited law school. Preferred: completed Federal Indian Law coursework. Externally funded applicants were also encouraged to apply.
Application deadline	March 18 of year of summer clerkship

Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President, Office of Legal Counsel

Position	Summer Legal Intern
Location	Navajo Nation; specific location not stated in the Turtle Talk posting
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Law students preferred; no additional qualifications stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Application deadline	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.

Navajo Nation Supreme Court

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Window Rock, Arizona
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting; housing in the Window Rock area was provided.
Qualifications	Law student status was implicit in the requested law school transcript. Navajo preference applied. Two paid positions and at least one potentially credit-bearing unpaid position were announced.

Application deadline	March 1 of the year of the clerkship
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Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior — Northeast Region

Position	Summer Law Clerk / Internship
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Location	Bloomington, Minnesota
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Work arrangement	Flexible full-time schedule.
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Qualifications	1L or 2L. Duties included drafting legal memoranda, litigation reports, and title opinions, and participating in client agency and Department of Justice strategy sessions.
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Application deadline	January 6 of year of clerkship
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Office of Tribal Justice, U.S. Department of Justice

Position	Law Student Volunteer
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Location	Washington, D.C.
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Work arrangement	Not stated
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Qualifications	Full-time rising 2L or 3L. Graduation ends eligibility except for graduate law students enrolled at least half-time and not practicing law. Excellent academic credentials, good writing, knowledge of federal Indian law, and familiarity with Tribes and Tribal matters.
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Application deadline	January 16 of year of clerkship
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Patterson Real Bird & Rasmussen LLP

Position	Summer Law Clerk
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Location	Louisville, Colorado
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Work arrangement	In-person
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Qualifications	Completed 2L year by summer 2027; completed Native American law coursework before the clerkship.
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Application deadline	September 21, 2026.
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Pechanga Tribal Government

Position	Legal Intern
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Location	Temecula, California / Pechanga Indian Reservation
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Work arrangement	In-person; telecommuting not permitted
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Qualifications	Current 2L at an ABA-accredited law school; Federal Indian Law coursework; accurate and thorough research ability; strong organization and prioritization; compliance with drug-free workplace policy and successful background investigation.
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Application deadline	Until filled.
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Poarch Band of Creek Indians

Position	Summer Law Intern
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Location	Atmore, Alabama
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Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
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Qualifications	Currently enrolled at an accredited law school; authorized to work in the United States; no pending disciplinary action; maturity and ability to maintain confidentiality; valid driver's license. Tribal employment preference applied.
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Application deadline	April 19 of year of summer clerkship
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Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP

Position	Native American Law Internships
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Location	San Diego, California
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Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
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Qualifications	Law student status was indicated by the posting's classification as a Native American law internship; no additional qualifications were stated in the Turtle Talk post.
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Application deadline	October 31 of year prior to clerkship
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Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians Civil Trial Court

Position	Virtual Summer Law Clerk
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Location	Remote
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Work arrangement	Remote
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Qualifications	Currently enrolled as a 2L or 3L at an ABA-accredited law school.
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Application deadline	Until filled.
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Rincon Tribal Court

Position	Virtual Summer Law Clerk
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Location	Remote
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Work arrangement	Remote
Qualifications	Currently enrolled as a 2L or 3L at an ABA-accredited law school; interest in Tribal justice systems. Preferred: American Indian Law or Federal Indian Law coursework.
Application deadline	Open until filled.

Seattle University School of Law — Center for Indian Law & Policy

Position	Indian Estate Planning Internship
Location	Tribal communities in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Wisconsin, and Montana
Work arrangement	In-person field placement; relocation could be required.
Qualifications	Second- or third-year law student at an ABA-accredited school; completed Wills and Trusts; own vehicle and laptop required. Indian law background was a plus but not required.
Application deadline	April 15 of year of clerkship

Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	San Francisco, California
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Law student; no additional qualifications stated in the Turtle Talk posting. The firm's practice included government, land use, renewable energy, environmental law, and a growing federal Indian law practice.
Application deadline	September 6 of year prior to clerkship

Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP

Position	Summer Associate
Location	Washington, D.C.; Anchorage, Alaska; San Diego, California
Work arrangement	Not stated; the submission placed clerks in the firm's offices.
Qualifications	Completed 2L year by summer of clerkship; demonstrated interest in Native American matters; excellent analysis, reasoning, and writing; collaborative communication; enthusiasm for advocacy; able to work independently and on a team. Alaska Native and American Indian students encouraged to apply.
Application deadline	August 30 of year prior to clerkship

Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP

Position	Summer Associate
Location	Anchorage, Alaska; Washington, D.C.; San Diego, California
Work arrangement	Not stated
Qualifications	2L student.
Application deadline	August 30 of the year preceding the clerkship

U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Oklahoma

Position	Volunteer Summer Law Clerk
Location	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	U.S. citizen; satisfactory background investigation; available 32–40 hours per week for 8–10 weeks. Application required a cover letter, résumé, transcript, writing sample, and questionnaire.
Application deadline	February 15 of the year of the clerkship

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division

Position	Volunteer Summer Internship
Location	Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	U.S. citizen; first-year law student after the first semester, 2L, 3L, or qualifying graduate-law student; enrolled at least half-time and in good academic standing. The recruitment particularly invited Native American law students.
Application deadline	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting; applications were being accepted when posted on December 19

Udall Foundation

Position	Native American Congressional Internship
Location	Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	In-person; participants live and work in Washington, D.C., in Congressional or Federal agency offices.
Qualifications	Open to Native American and Alaska Native college, graduate, and law students. Applicant must be a U.S. citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident; an enrolled member of a federally recognized Tribe; and a current student or recent graduate of an accredited higher-education

institution. Selection also considers commitment to Tribal public policy or Tribal communities, academic achievement, relevant skills, and the Udall values and legacy.

Application deadline	January 15 of the year of the internship by 11:59 p.m. PST.
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United South and Eastern Tribes / USET Sovereignty Protection Fund

Position	Summer Law Clerk Program
Location	Washington, D.C.
Work arrangement	Hybrid; at least three in-office days per week
Qualifications	Currently enrolled in law school during the program; strong academic performance; developed research and writing skills; commitment to advocating for Tribal Nations. 2Ls preferred; 1Ls welcome.
Application deadline	September 30 of the year preceding the clerkship

Waseyabek LLC

Position	Legal Summer Intern
Location	Grand Rapids, Michigan
Work arrangement	Not stated
Qualifications	Enrolled in an accredited law school with at least one year completed; strong research, writing, and analytical skills; professionalism with confidential information; attention to detail and organization. Interest in corporate, regulatory, and/or Tribal law is a plus.
Application deadline	Open until filled.

Water Protector Legal Collective

Position	Summer Law Fellowship
Location	Remote
Work arrangement	Remote
Qualifications	Rising 2L or 3L. The description also invited exceptional 1Ls with strong research/writing and demonstrated commitment to social justice, Indigenous rights, or environmental law. Reliable internet, self-direction, time management, and a 400-hour summer commitment required.
Application deadline	Priority deadline: June 1 of the year of the clerkship

Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation

Position	Summer Law Clerk (two positions)
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Location	San Bernardino, California
Work arrangement	In-person; on-site required
Qualifications	Enrolled in an ABA-accredited law school and completed the first year before the clerkship.
Application deadline	Open until filled.

Yurok Tribe

Position	Summer Law Clerk
Location	Klamath, California
Work arrangement	Not stated in the Turtle Talk posting.
Qualifications	Law-student status was indicated by the clerkship. Applicants seeking academic credit were asked to summarize their school's supervisor obligations. The position was unpaid, and applicants were encouraged to seek outside public-interest funding.
Application deadline	November 13 of year preceding clerkship.