

# **2023 Cornell Law School Summer Grant FAQs**

## **December 2022**

### **1. DEFINITION**

The Cornell Law School Summer Grant Program provides funding to Cornell Law Students for unpaid summer positions with public interest organizations, government agencies, and judges, and in some cases, public interest law firms. A full-time Summer Grant consists of two components: 1) a PIF (Public Interest Fellowship) grant; and 2) a Federal Work-Study grant.

1. PIF (Public Interest Fellowship) grants:

PIF grants are funded by the Law School. PIF grants are guaranteed for all 1Ls and 2Ls who secure eligible summer placements and meet PIF requirements as outlined below. The PIF application process is administered by the Career Development Office.

2. Federal Work-Study grants:

The Federal Work-Study program is funded by the Federal Government. Work-Study grants are part of your financial aid package and are administered by the University through the Law School's Financial Aid Office.

### **2. GRANT AMOUNTS**

1Ls are awarded a grant of up to \$5,000. 2Ls are awarded a grant of up to \$7,000.

**Note: If you meet PIF grant requirements but are not eligible for a Federal Work-Study grant, you are still eligible for the full grant amount. All eligible students must apply for federal work-study.**

### **3. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO EARN THE SUMMER GRANT?**

#### ***1Ls and 2Ls***

- a. Complete and submit the on-line PIF grant application by **March 15**.
- b. For US citizens and permanent residents, apply for Work-Study funding through the Financial Aid Office.
- c. Secure summer employment with a qualifying employer.
- d. Complete the required paperwork including an I-9 and summer placement agreements.

#### ***1Ls only***

- e. Attend the Public Interest Symposium in April 2023

### **4. WHO ARE QUALIFYING EMPLOYERS?**

The employer must be a non-profit legal organization a government agency, or a judge. For example, federal, state and local agencies, prosecutors' offices, public defender offices, legal services organizations and other non-profits are qualifying employers. Federal, state, and local judges and courts qualify as well. Jobs with Cornell Law School clinical programs qualify for PIF funding. Jobs as research or teaching assistants for professors do not qualify for PIF funding.

### **5. CAN I USE THE SUMMER GRANT TO FUND AN INTERNSHIP OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.?**

As Federal Work-Study funds cannot be used outside of the U.S, only the PIF portion of the summer grant can be used internationally. In light of this, Cornell will award five Public International Fellowships of \$5,000 each for 1Ls and \$7000 each to 2Ls working for public international organizations or government agencies outside the U.S. You will be able to indicate your international placement in the PIF application.

### **6. WHERE DO I GET A PIF GRANT APPLICATION AND HOW AND WHEN DO I SUBMIT IT?**

A link to the electronic PIF grant application form will be emailed to all 1Ls and 2Ls in December. You must submit your PIF grant application by **March 15**. **IMPORTANT:** We know that some of you will not have your summer job nailed down by March 15. That's OK. You must submit an initial application anyway. Once you find a job, you **must update your application**. You may change your mind and not take the grant should your

plans change, **but if you do not submit the initial application by March 15, you may not be eligible for a PIF grant.**

#### **7. WHERE DO I GET A FEDERAL WORK-STUDY APPLICATION AND HOW AND WHEN DO I SUBMIT IT?**

Work-Study eligibility is determined by the Law School's Financial Aid Office. They will notify you about your eligibility for federal work-study funds. Note that you must be a U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident Alien ("Green Card" holder) to qualify for Federal Work-Study funding. Non-U.S. citizens working in the United States qualify for the PIF grant of \$5,000 for 1Ls and \$7,000 for 2Ls.

#### **8. CAN I STILL GET THE FUNDING IF I DO NOT APPLY FOR FEDERAL WORK STUDY?**

All eligible students **must** apply for federal work-study. No funding will be disbursed until the financial aid office makes a final determination of eligibility. International students are not required to apply for federal work-study.

#### **9. WHAT DOCUMENTS MUST MY EMPLOYER SIGN?**

Cornell University requires that your employer sign two documents: 1) the Letter of Intent and 2) the Work-Study Agreement. The Career Development Office will handle this process – you do not need to negotiate with your employer about signing these documents.

#### **10. WHAT DOCUMENTS WILL I NEED TO SIGN UP IF I AM ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL WORK-STUDY**

You will need to complete an I-9 – Employment Eligibility Certification, <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9>, mandated by the federal government. You will need to present acceptable documents evidencing identity and employment authorization. The list of acceptable documents can be found on the last page here, <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-9-paper-version.pdf>. You will need to have the original unexpired documents in order to complete this step. You cannot use pictures or copies of the documents.

#### **11. WHAT IS THE PUBLIC INTEREST SYMPOSIUM AND HOW DO I ATTEND?**

The Public Interest Symposium consists of presentations/discussions with Cornell alumni/ae who received the law school's prestigious Frank H.T. Rhodes Public Interest Law Fellowship to launch their public interest legal careers. This year's Symposium is scheduled for April 2023.

#### **12. HOW AND WHEN DO I GET PAID IF I AM RECEIVING PIF AND WORK-STUDY GRANTS?**

Your \$5,000 or \$7,000 Summer Grant will be paid to you on a bi-weekly basis through Cornell University's payroll system. The payroll calendar is here, <https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/payroll/about/paycalendars> (Nonexempt Biweekly Calendar) The hourly rate is \$15.63 for 1Ls and \$21.88 for 2Ls. To earn your full grant amount, you will need to work 320 hours over the course of the summer, which is approximately 40 hours per week for 8 weeks. You will receive a notice from the Career Development Office in late March with instructions regarding the necessary paperwork needed. They will assist you with the required Work-Study and payroll paperwork. You can arrange for direct deposit with the University Payroll Office so your paycheck will be deposited into your bank account.

#### **13. CAN I WORK MORE THAN 320 HOURS AND RECEIVE A LARGER GRANT?**

No. The maximum PIF/Work-Study grant is \$5,000 for 1Ls and \$7,000 for 2Ls.

#### **14. CAN I HOLD MORE THAN ONE JOB?**

You are limited to 40 hours a week for all your Cornell University positions. If you are planning on holding more than one Cornell University position, please make sure to let us know so that we can make sure to coordinate with any office involved.

#### **15. HOW DO YOU KEEP TRACK OF THE HOURS I WORK?**

We will provide you with courtesy notices throughout the summer. We will also check-in with your supervisor to confirm the hours you claim on your timesheet.

**15. HOW AND WHEN DO I GET PAID IF I AM NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL WORK-STUDY**

If you are not eligible for Federal Work-Study, you will need to register for the funding by March 15, secure a placement, complete the required paperwork and summer placement agreements before starting your internship. You will receive a link to a digital timecard you will need to complete in order to receive payments. Payments are made approximately every two weeks to your bursar account. You can find information about requesting a refund <https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/bursar/students-parents/deposit-refunds>.

**10. ARE THE GRANTS TAXABLE?**

Yes, PIF and Work-Study grants are taxable income for IRS purposes. For international students, if there is no tuition attributed to your bursar account, PIF grants may be subject to a 14% tax withholding. You will want to reach out to the tax office (<https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/tax>; [tax@cornell.edu](mailto:tax@cornell.edu)) to find out whether there is a treaty in place with your home country to allow for the tax to be returned to you.

**11. WHAT IF MY EMPLOYER CAN PAY ME OR I RECEIVE ANOTHER TYPE OF PUBLIC INTEREST GRANT?**

Because demand is high and funds are limited, if your employer is able to contribute any funding, your PIF award will be reduced by that amount. No student will make less than the PIF award of \$5000 for 1Ls and \$7000 for 2Ls.

**12. CAN I RECEIVE A SUMMER GRANT AND COURSE CREDIT FOR MY SUMMER INTERNSHIP?**

No. You may not receive funding and course credit simultaneously for your summer internship. If you opt to receive course credit, you need to enroll in the Law School's Summer Externship course.