

## LEGAL LIFTOFF GUIDELINES UW COLLEGE OF LAW

### 1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

*Legal Liftoff* is a mentorship program conducted over the course of an academic break. The intention is to provide the student, or mentee with a possible mentor into the future, and for a supervisor, or mentor to allow a student the opportunity to observe real world practice and provide a discussion of various issues.

As a **mentor**, you will have the ability to make a lasting impact on the life and career of a student. Mentors can provide advice on classes, Bar exam tips, practice areas, best business practices, work/life balance, and ethics. Mentors will also have the opportunity to ask students about current technological trends, the climate of legal education and any other relevant inquiry.

As a **mentee**, you will expand your legal network, find a career path that is right for you, and learn valuable, first-hand expertise from a seasoned professional. Mentees will have the opportunity to ask questions of seasoned practitioners ranging from procedural issues within the community, substantive legal questions as well as inquiries related to the realities of the practice.

### 2. GOALS OF LEGAL LIFTOFF

The program aims to provide students with an opportunity to develop professional skills, and for mentors to develop positive early practice protocols with young professionals who are just beginning their legal journey.

The mentee objectives are:

- To expose students to a broad range of lawyering skills, which may include client interviews, counseling, negotiation, court appearances, administrative proceedings, settlement conferences, discovery, legal research and analysis, formulation of case strategy and public interest advocacy;
- To further a student's understanding of, and ability to apply, legal principles learned in the classroom to actual problems;
- To foster a better understanding of the lawyer's or judge's role in our legal system; and
- To provide opportunities for students to explore career interests in a variety of legal settings and to begin to build a professional network.

The mentor objectives are:

- To contribute to the overall development of the Wyoming State Bar, both through mentorship and modeling;
- Develop community contacts for future networking, client referrals, and coordination of ideas;
- Establish your reputation as a subject matter expert in a particular field; and
- Gain CLE and Pro Bono credit with the Wyoming State Bar. (*See Addendum for form*)

## **2. RECORDKEEPING & CONFIDENTIALITY**

Should a mentor be amendable to allowing a student to observe, please be cognizant of the Wyoming Rules of Professional Responsibility, specifically Rule 1.6 which pertains to confidentiality with a client. The client may waive the privilege, with informed consent, in writing, for the limited purpose of mentorship for a law student. *See WY Rules of Professional Conduct, R. 1.6.* However, failure to obtain a client's informed permission may lead to a waiver of the attorney-client privilege. Additionally we would recommend you have your mentee student sign a confidentiality agreement for any and all privileged information they may be exposed to while under your supervision for the week. *See WY Rules of Professional Conduct R. 5.3, cmt. 2. (See Addendum for sample)*

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MENTOR**

This program is not intended to serve as a traditional internship, as such there is no remuneration, expectation of a job upon completion, or obligation on the part of the mentor. The mentor is expected to supply the student with meaningful experiences that best demonstrate the daily practice of law in the region. The student should be allowed to attend hearings, participate in case analysis, and observe client interactions (with proper authorizations in place). Encourage the student to ask relevant questions to better understand how a case is evaluated and processed. It may also be helpful for the student to observe how the office staff function within the law office or judicial chambers. Realize students may have no working knowledge of how a firm functions, allow them the opportunity to explore the environment under your supervision and guidance. As members of Bar, there is an expectation of courtesy, respect and professionalism, please continue to demonstrate these attributes to your mentee throughout the week. Additionally, we ask that mentors fill out the evaluation form at the conclusion of the week, addressing both the program, as well that the student. *(See Addendum for form)*

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MENTEE**

As mentors are busy professionals, mentees should understand the work to their clients must, and should come first. Mentees should be flexible with scheduling and understanding when conflicts arise. In agreeing to participate in the program, the student must comply with the UW College of Law Handbook, including all expectations of honesty, professionalism and integrity. If provided opportunities to observe and participate, the student should, to the best of their ability, comply with the request, asking all necessary questions to best complete the assigned task. It is the mentee's responsibility to ask questions, communicate concerns and work with the mentor to overcome any issues that may arise. Upon agreement of the schedule for the week, the mentee is obligated to arrive in a timely manner and to stay for the duration of the agreed upon period, unless dismissed by the mentor. Failure to complete the program will result in the mentee's suspension from future mentorship opportunities as provided through the Office of Career Services. Additionally, we ask that mentees fill out an objective form prior to the program, as well as an evaluation at the conclusion of the week, addressing both the program, their objectives, as well the placement overall. *(See Addendum for forms)*

## **5. MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS**

The supervisors and student should participate a minimum of 10 hours over the course of the week. Should both parties elect to contribute more, that is each party's prerogative. The minimum of 10 hours (or more) may be over the course of the week, or within a few days, whichever is most convenient for the participants. There should also be reasonable contact as necessary between student and supervisor through phone and email communication.

There is not remuneration of any kind to any party. This includes pay, course credit or the expectation of a recommendation or job position upon completion.

## **6. QUESTIONS, CONCERNS & CONTACT INFORMATION**

Should a question or issue arise with either the student, supervisor, or program we would encourage you to reach out to the Program Director, Ashli Tomisich, or to the Director of Marketing, Christine Reed.

### **Contact:**

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