



careers
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FELLOWSHIP POSITION:

Neighborhood Legal Fellow

Neighborhood Development Division | Office of Legal Counsel

Want to gain experience in local government and nonprofit law? Passionate about community and economic development? Apply for the Neighborhood Legal Fellows Program to fulfill the New York State 50-hour pro bono requirement, while obtaining cutting-edge experience in local government, nonprofit law and corporate governance issues.

Agency Description:

The New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS) is a vibrant, client-centered agency whose mission is to serve New York's small businesses, jobseekers and commercial districts. SBS makes it easier for companies in New York City to start, operate, and expand by providing direct assistance to business owners, supporting commercial districts, promoting financial and economic opportunity among minority- and women-owned businesses, preparing New Yorkers for jobs, and linking employers with a skilled and qualified workforce. SBS continues to reach for higher professional standards through innovative systems, new approaches to government, and a strong focus on its employees.

The Neighborhood Development Division (NDD) supports community-based economic development organizations throughout New York City in order to create the conditions under which local businesses thrive and residents enjoy access to a vibrant mix of goods and services. Through its network of 72 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), SBS's Neighborhood Development Division oversees the provision of over \$120 million in services annually. Neighborhood Development also partners with dozens of Local Development Corporations, Merchants' Associations and other neighborhood economic development organizations through Avenue NYC, a competitive grant program that funds commercial revitalization programs (business attraction efforts, place making campaigns, merchant organizing initiatives, and other economic development activities) in all five boroughs.

The Office of Legal Counsel provides legal support to all SBS programs and initiatives. Under the supervision of the General Counsel / Deputy Commissioner for Legal & Regulatory Affairs, and the Deputy General Counsel, the Legal Counsel Unit ensures that SBS programs are operating efficiently and are in compliance with all Federal, State, and City laws.

Job Description:

NDD and the Legal Counsel Unit are looking for a Neighborhood Legal Fellow to provide legal guidance and governance support to New York City BIDs. Fellows support neighborhood-serving organizations by providing assistance to smaller BIDs, and BIDs without in-house counsel, in navigating matters of nonprofit governance and other compliance issues. Legal Fellows are supervised by a licensed attorney at SBS.

The Neighborhood Legal Fellow will:

- Review the corporate governance documents and operations of at least two newly selected BIDs during the Spring 2016 semester. Governing documents will include, but are not limited to, certificates of incorporation, by-laws, and management policies.

The Department of Small Business Services and the City of New York is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

- Perform tasks that include, but are not limited to reviewing and revising by-laws (in light of the Non-Profit Revitalization Act), reviewing operations in reference to district plans and other governance documents, reviewing policies and procedures, attending board meetings to governance corporate compliance, and performing other related governance work/ research.
- Be matched with at least two (2) BIDs from the previous semester to monitor implementation and adherence to previous recommendations. Fellows will be responsible for working with the BID and SBS staff to identify specific challenges, design work plans, and deliver solutions.

Fellows may be needed for additional availability with their assigned BIDs, but must be available to accept questions from their BIDs for at least one (1) day per week. Overall, it is anticipated that the fellows will need to commit roughly 5-6 hours of time per week over the course of the Spring semester. Hours are generally flexible and designed to fit around the fellows' law school course schedule. Fellows will have a dedicated workspace and individual email address at SBS.

- Fellows should attend as many regular Board and Board Committee meetings as possible, and be included on all Board-related email communication. Fellows will be given appropriate notice of such meetings.
- Fellows should schedule time to conduct office visits to their respective districts as necessary. Fellows should plan to spend at least 7 hours on-site with each of their BIDs each semester.
- Fellows will be required to draft numerous memos, and may be required to deliver a summarizing presentation to the Board of Directors at the conclusion of the program.
- Each fellow will be required to attend a bi-weekly seminar (typically two (2) hours on Friday) led by SBS staff to discuss, in round table format, current legal issues, governance best practices, drafting techniques, and an ongoing review of the legislative process enabling the BID network in New York City.
- Each fellow will work under direct supervision of a member of the SBS Legal Counsel Unit in coordination with the Neighborhood Development Division program staff. Fellows will also be required to attend the Agency's legal staff meetings from time to time during the day.
- Fellows will be required to monitor SBS email via remote access while out of office on a responsible schedule to be determined by the supervising attorney.

Qualifications:

The ideal Neighborhood Legal Fellow will:

- Have or be pursuing a Juris Doctor (J.D.) (preference given for second or third year law students.)
- Have successfully completed a class in Corporations or Corporate Governance.
- Be in enrolled in or have completed an advanced level drafting/ writing course.
- Be detail-orientated with the ability to clearly and succinctly explain complex legal issues to non-attorneys.
- Be comfortable with public speaking and addressing a corporation's board of directors.
- Have an interest in economic development, urban planning, program management, nonprofit law, capacity building, government affairs, corporate governance practices, in-house counsel practice, or a related field.

How to Apply:

To apply, email your resume, cover letter, and a brief writing sample (maximum four pages; should provide evidence of legal citation, writing style, and clarity) with the following subject line: Neighborhood Legal Fellows Spring 16 to careers@sbs.nyc.gov. The application is due by **midnight on Wednesday, January 6th**.

NOTE: Only those candidates under consideration will be contacted.

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