

SARAH W. MITCHELL

SUMMER PUBLIC INTEREST INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

ESTABLISHED & SPONSORED BY

DISABILITY RIGHTS  NEW JERSEY

SUMMER 2025

The Sarah W. Mitchell Summer Public Interest Internship Program seeks to promote awareness of and commitment to careers in law and public interest which advance the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities.

The next cohort of interns will work alongside our staff attorneys and advocates to advance our mission and gain invaluable experience with a variety of legal and social issues, learning first hand what it means to advocate for people with disabilities in New Jersey.

Past interns have become employed at Disability Rights NJ, as well as other nonprofit public interest organizations.

THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE:

- Onsite monitoring of a variety of settings throughout the state where individuals with disabilities live, work, or receive services.
- Research legal issues in individual client cases or to support Disability Rights NJ's systemic advocacy and litigation. *(law interns only)*
- Work alongside staff attorneys and advocates in individual client representation at all stages, from interview, advice, counseling, to appearance in hearings or drafting pleadings and briefs. *(law interns only)*
- Individual casework involving investigations of allegation of abuse or neglect or advocacy assistance on response protocol.
- Support systemic projects addressing abuse or neglect of individuals with disabilities.
- Support with research or writing on legislation or policy affecting individuals with disabilities
- Outreach and education activities.

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The importance of their presence and contributions to our work at Disability Rights NJ speaks to our need to ensure that well-trained and educated professionals continue the important work of advancing justice and the legal rights of people with disabilities.



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The Sarah W. Mitchell Summer Public Interest Internship Program, named for the founding Executive Director of Disability Rights NJ, provides internships each summer to one law student and one undergraduate or graduate student in social work or psychology field of study, where the student has a demonstrated interest working with individuals with disabilities.

WHAT PAST INTERNS SAID:

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**TRANSFORMATIVE
INVALUABLE
HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE
WELCOMING
INCLUSIVE CULTURE**”



Shanelle
Jean-Baptiste,
Delaware
Law School

As a Sarah W. Mitchell intern, I had hands-on experience in various things. I was able to participate in accompanying staff on monitoring visits and assist attorneys with policy comments. My time with Disability Rights NJ was a transformative experience that solidified my commitment to pursuing a career in public interest law.

My experience as a Sarah W. Mitchell Summer Intern was invaluable. Disability Rights NJ fosters a welcoming and inclusive culture. I received so much support from supervisors and colleagues, and had the opportunity to hone in on projects that piqued my interest.



C Ledford,
Northeastern
University



Kaitlyn Flanagan, Northeastern University

The staff at Disability Rights NJ were extremely welcoming throughout my experience. I had the opportunity to work with multiple teams on policy issues, individual issues, and institutional monitoring. My summer as a Sarah W. Mitchell Intern cemented my goal to pursue a career in public interest, specifically mental health advocacy.



THE SELECTION PROCESS:

As the program sponsor, Disability Rights NJ screens all applicants to identify those with the greatest potential and commitment to public interest work. Promising applicants will receive a preliminary interview with Disability Rights NJ and, if qualified, will be referred to our management team for a final interview and decisions.

Placements are typically for a 10-week period at 35 hours per week with a flexible remote work policy. All interns will participate in a multi-day orientation in June and a closing gathering to recap the summer and discuss public interest opportunities.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The competitive internship program seeks applicants who have demonstrated a commitment to social justice through prior work, extracurricular school activities, and volunteer efforts. Grades, honors, and personal achievements are also important. Both rising second year and third year law students will be considered for the legal internship position.

HOW TO APPLY:

Applicants can submit their resumes, a letter of interest, and a writing sample to the **Careers** section of our website:

[DISABILITYRIGHTSNJ.ORG/GET-IN-TOUCH/CAREERS](https://disabilityrightsNJ.org/get-in-touch/careers)

Applications will be considered in the order received, and hiring decisions will continue until all positions are filled. Interested students are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Visit our website and follow us on social media to learn more about the unique work of New Jersey's Protection and Advocacy system. For questions about the program email advocate@disabilityrightsNJ.org.

COMPENSATION:

Summer 2025 law interns will receive a weekly stipend: \$1,000 for rising third-year law students and \$800 for rising second-year law students. Graduate students will be paid \$20 per hour and undergraduate students will be paid \$16 per hour. We welcome students who have secured other funding as well.



ADVANCING JUSTICE. ADVOCATING INCLUSION.

