



Externship Programs in a Covid-19 World: How to Adapt and Manage

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Session Agenda

1. How to bring remote opportunities to the law school.
2. How to support employers to offer and run remote programs.
3. How to help students and employers build relationships in the remote environment.
4. How to help students best attain and frame practical skill sets in the remote environment.



Bringing Remote Opportunities to the Law School

Special & Aggressive Employer Outreach

How to

- Research—make a list of far flung alumni in good target firms
- Get all of their emails
- Email away—proposing zoom or phone calls
- Speak about the students readiness to work remotely but they still need supervision



Example



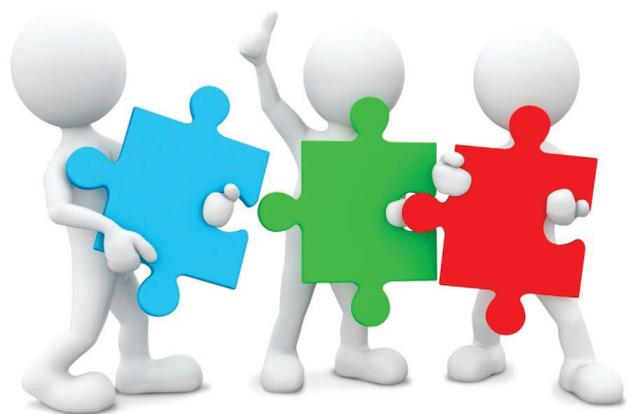
- Read an article about the class action suits on ZANTAC.
- Contacted all firms listed in article and asked if they will be needing extra hands for discovery.
- One firm replied and gave 3 nicely paying, remote discovery positions.

Supporting Employers to Develop and Run Remote Externships

*Develop Strategically,
Interact Often, Give Feedback*

Developing Remote Externships

- Evaluate how externships established before COVID would function in the remote environment.
- Ask questions and seek necessary permissions and information ahead of time.
- Think outside the box for new externship opportunities that can be accomplished remotely.
- Use the new use of technology to further the goals of the externship.



Tips for Running Remote Externships from Home



- Set clear expectations for students on what the externship will look like.
- Speak to students consistently on the phone or on Zoom, even if e-mail would be “easier.”
- Discuss the best means of communication and how often that communication will take place.
- Encourage students to check in and ask you what they should be working on. Make clear to students that you want to hear from them, and you are not too busy.
- Give feedback to students either immediately or through an evaluation.
- Maintain consistent communication both with the extern class and one-on-one.
- Acknowledge the challenges of working remotely for all employees. Strategize ways to prevent feelings of isolation.

Relationship Building in the Remote Environment

Set expectations, consistent communication, networking, wrapping up.

Set Expectations

Law Schools & Externs	Externship sites
Require 1x1 check in meetings as a minimum, provide externship program handbook.	Set externs up with technology platforms in advance: Slack, Google Hangouts, Teams.
Student should reach out to supervising attorney ahead of time.	Virtual orientation with all externs.



Communication -- Keep it Consistent

Externs	Externship sites
Schedule 1x1 meeting times and confirm how attorneys prefer daily communication.	Provide plenty of feedback on assignments through phone calls and virtual meetings.
Ask questions frequently and be specific, Clarify scope of assignments and deadlines.	Include externs in office meetings, client meetings, court hearings, depositions, etc.



Make and Leave a Good Impression

CREATE NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

- Virtual happy hours.
- Virtual get-to-know you meetings over coffee.
- Virtual brown bag lunches.

FINISH STRONG: W.R.A.P.

- Writing Sample
- Reference
- Appreciation
- Plan to keep in touch



How to Leverage Remote Experience

*Be intentional about practical skills & highlight
unique attributes of virtual work*

Maximize Practical Skills



Resume Highlights

DO NOT WRITE:

Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.

Extern

Ithaca, NY
Aug. – Dec. 2021

- Zoomed with clients in family law cases including custody, child support, and family offense petitions.
- Assisted attorneys online with cases for victims of domestic violence.
- Observed virtual administrative hearings and researched relevant regulations.
- Participated in law-student diversity committee and supported creation of intern training video “How to Work with Clients in Poverty.”

INSTEAD, WRITE:

Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.

Extern

Ithaca, NY
Aug. – Dec. 2021

- Interviewed clients for family law cases including custody, child support, and family offense petitions.
- Drafted motions, memoranda, orders, interrogatories, and stipulations for matrimonial cases for victims of domestic violence.
- Investigated SSI/SSD denials, researched SSA regulations, and briefed supervisors on virtual administrative hearings.
- Facilitated remote law-student diversity committee and co-produced intern training video “How to Work with Clients in Poverty.”

Interview Highlights

“Tell me about a time where you faced a challenge. How did you overcome it?”

“What skill do you possess that is not reflected in your resume?”

“How would your former supervisors describe you?”

“I see you did an externship in law school. What was that experience like?”



Thank you for watching! Be sure to review the handouts!

At 4:00pm Eastern today, there will be a debrief discussion if you'd like to gather with your colleagues and discuss this topic further.