

III. What are the areas of practice within the governmental realm?

A. Prosecuting Attorneys

Offices at both the state and local level. Assistant District Attorneys appear in court and handle misdemeanors and some felonies to start. Further on, more complex cases are assigned.

B. Public Defenders

Serve as court-appointed counsel for indigent persons in criminal cases. Significant amount of trial experience. Start with misdemeanor traffic cases and then move on to misdemeanors.

C. Other Governmental Offices

Employment through a wide range of federal, state, and local departments and agencies. For example, includes the Department of Justice, the State Attorney General's Office, and other municipality employment.

IV. Want more information?

Stop by the **Public Interest Law Career Services (PILCS)** office for more information on different areas of social justice law, internship & fellowship opportunities, and resume review.

Career resources and opportunities are also posted on the PILCS website.

http://www.scu.edu/law/careers/pirc_links_2.html

PILCS Fall Semester Hours:

M	10:30–Noon, 1-5:30
Tu	10:30-11:30, 1-5:30
W	1-5:30
Th	10:30 – Noon, 2-3:30

To set up an appointment, email pilcs@scu.edu or call 408.554.6930.



¹Definition from *Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide*, Vol. 1 (2005-2006)

WELCOME TO PUBLIC SERVICE LAW



I. What is public service law?

Public service law, which incorporates both public interest and government sector work, includes work on behalf of individuals and causes not often served by the for-profit bar, which are pursued on the basis of concepts of justice, equity and advancement of the public good.¹

II. What are the areas of practice within the public interest realm?

There are primarily two kinds of public interest work: client oriented and policy oriented. The categories are further subdivided within each area of law.

A. Client Oriented

Legal Aid Societies

Legal Aid Societies are community and neighborhood based organizations which service low-income persons.

Example:

Bay Area Legal Aid

Provides free legal services to eligible low-income residents in priorities areas of housing, public benefits, health access and domestic violence. Clients must live in one of the county's Bay Area Legal Aid provides services in.

Client-Oriented Organizations

Client-oriented organizations represent clients in an area of specialization, such as disability rights, prisoner issues, or immigration law.

Example:

Legal Assistance for Seniors

Helps seniors maintain access to health care, prevent elder abuse, advocates housing and nursing home issues, and advocates the rights of incapacitated people.

B. Policy Oriented

Impact and Class-Action Litigation

Impact and class-action litigation represents cases which pose a legal question affecting a large number of people and may result in systemic reform. This area of law may also include legislative and administrative advocacy.

Example:

The Impact Fund

Their mission is to enhance the ability of lawyers to bring public interest impact litigation in the areas of civil rights, poverty and environmental justice. Besides co-counseling on selected cases, The Impact Fund grants money to public interest lawyers to advance costs in systemic impact litigation, provides as-needed counseling, advice and assistance on issues that arise in complex litigation, and provides trainings on various aspects of class action and impact litigation.

Social Action Organizations

Social action organizations advocate public policy and law reform through means other than litigation.

Example:

Equality California

Equality California leads efforts for LGBT civil rights at the state level through an array of strategies including sponsoring legislation and leading efforts to ensure their passage, lobbying legislators and other government officials, building coalitions, and empowering other organizations and individuals to engage in the political process.

Support Centers

Support centers provide assistance, research, analysis and dissemination of information to other programs.

Example:

Immigration Legal Resource Center

The ILRC is a national resource center that provides trainings, materials and advocacy to advance immigrant rights. They train lawyers and paralegals on ever-changing and complex immigration law. In addition, they educate and empower those in the immigrant community.