



CBF Kimball R. Anderson and Karen Gatsis Anderson Public Interest Law Fellowship 2023 Application Guidelines

Through the generous gift of Kimball and Karen Anderson, The Chicago Bar Foundation (CBF) awards public interest law fellowships to provide loan repayment assistance for outstanding recent law school graduates who either are presently working or have accepted an offer to work for CBF-funded public interest law organizations. The CBF first awarded the fellowship in 2003. The CBF now awards a single \$25,000 fellowship each year to an individual who demonstrates the following: (1) commitment to public interest work, (2) academic achievement in law school, and (3) outstanding character and integrity.

The CBF awards fellowship funds in five (5) installments of \$5,000 over five years, contingent upon continued compliance with the terms of the fellowship. Each award is a forgivable loan that the CBF will forgive upon continued compliance with the terms of the fellowship. Under current tax laws, the CBF believes fellowship funds should be tax-free income for the recipient to the maximum extent permitted by law.*

Criteria for Eligibility

Fellowship applicants must have educational debt of at least \$25,000 (a significant portion of which must be law school debt) and must have graduated from law school on or after May 2018 or anticipate graduation in spring 2023. Applicants must currently work for a CBF-funded organization or have accepted an offer to work for a CBF-funded organization. Award recipients must make a five-year commitment to work full-time at a CBF-funded organization beginning with the date of the fellowship award. A list of CBF-funded organizations is available at <http://chicagobarfoundation.org/grants/org-support/#grantees>.

Application Method

Applicants should submit the following materials for consideration by the selection committee:

- Completed application form including required attachments (see the end of this document)
- Cover letter
- Resume
- Letter or letters of reference (at least one, no more than three)
- Brief essay, no longer than three (3) pages, explaining the applicant's commitment to public interest law, his or her role at the CBF-funded organization, and the impact of the applicant's work at that organization. Applicants may also include any information they feel is relevant to the committee's decision, such as information about the applicant's financial need or particular circumstances.

**The CBF intends that the loans issued pursuant to the Fellowship are tax-free to recipients upon their forgiveness by the CBF. We believe in good faith that our forgiveness of loans issued as part of the Fellowship Program will not create taxable income to loan recipients under the Internal Revenue Code based on the exemption in 26 U.S.C. 108(f). However, each recipient ultimately is responsible for determining his or her own federal tax income liability and to make any required disclosures to the IRS and other taxing bodies.*

Complete applications are due by May 26th, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Please email your application materials to etincher@chicagobarfoundation.org; do not mail your application. Transcripts should be sent to etincher@chicagobarfoundation.org from your law school.

Selection Method

A selection committee made up of representatives of the Chicago legal community will review complete applications. Applicants should be aware of factors the committee will likely consider when reviewing application materials.

- (1) Commitment to public interest work:
 - Public interest work experience including employment and internships
 - Participation in groups that support public interest activities
 - Pro bono activities and other volunteer experience
- (2) Academic achievement in law school, which may include:
 - Grades and class rank
 - Participation in law review or moot court
 - Academic honors and awards
 - Academic based scholarship awards
- (3) Outstanding character and integrity
 - Qualities observed and noted in letters of reference
 - Special awards or recognition for such qualities

The Selection Committee may choose to grant a limited number of personal interviews. The final award decision will be announced at the CBA/CBF Pro Bono and Public Service Awards Luncheon held on July 20th, 2023 at the Hilton Chicago, and the 2023 Fellowship recipient will be recognized.

Recipient Participation

The fellowship recipient is honored for his/her dedication to public interest law, academic achievement and outstanding character and integrity. The recipient of the fellowship should continue to demonstrate the positive qualities that led to his or her selection from a field of qualified applicants.

Recipients are a part of the Chicago legal aid and public interest law community and should seek ways to contribute to that community. At a minimum, recipients should be 1) members of The Chicago Bar Association (recipients will receive complimentary CBA membership), 2) participate in the CBA's Legal Aid Committee and 3) register and regularly use www.IllinoisLegalAid.org. Recipients also should consider mentoring a public interest-minded law student.

Fellowship recipients may be asked to submit proof to the CBF of financial circumstances or payment of loans to lenders. Recipients must responsibly manage their loan repayment and when appropriate, seek options such as consolidation of loans to maintain a lower interest rate on outstanding debt.

Fellowship recipients are expected to work for a CBF-funded organization for the entire time that they receive fellowship funds. Recipients who leave their CBF-funded organization are subject to forfeiture of their award unless they move on to another CBF-funded legal aid or public interest law organization within a reasonable time. Absent exceptional circumstances, recipients who do not remain employed by a CBF-funded organization are expected to repay the CBF their outstanding loan balance, as it will not be forgiven. If changes in the employment circumstances of the fellowship recipient arise (such as temporary or permanent leave from the organization), the recipient must immediately inform the CBF of the change in circumstances.

The CBF may ask fellowship recipients to offer feedback about the application process and participation in the fellowship award program.

Fellowship recipients must agree to the terms of the fellowship when they are selected for the award.

Questions/Additional Information

For additional information, contact Elise Tincher at etincher@chicagobarfoundation.org