



Articling at CELA

Legal Representation

Law Reform

Referrals

Public Education

Community Development

Research

Networking

Citizen Action

CELA offers a unique articling experience, focusing on administrative/environmental law. The articling student deals directly with individuals seeking legal information, giving the student valuable practice in dealing with the public and potential clients. The articling student also gains background to the political process as part of CELA's law reform activities. Finally, there is considerable opportunity to gain litigation experience.

Articling Activities

Students are given the opportunity to participate in researching and writing articles, position papers, and submissions under the supervision of CELA staff. There are also opportunities to appear before standing committees, city councils or commissions, and to give presentations at conferences.

Legal Research and Litigation

Case work activities include legal research, writing memos and draft opinion letters, drafting motion records, affidavits and *facta*; meeting with clients, attending motions court, assisting lawyers at discoveries and hearings, and conducting corporate and title searches.

Public Outreach

Most legal inquiries from the public are initially directed to the articling student, who is responsible for researching the issue and providing an answer in consultation with one of the lawyers. Students may also write articles for CELA website give interviews, or deliver talks to school and community groups.

Working at CELA

The articling student is an important member of the team which consists of four staff lawyers, three researchers and two support staff. Work is assigned and monitored by the staff lawyers, although there are many times when the student is required to work as part of a larger group. At the same time, with only four lawyers, articling at CELA provides an excellent hands on learning environment. Students receive a high degree of responsibility and, as such, it is important that the student be a self-starter and be comfortable working independently.

The staff at CELA foster an office atmosphere which is congenial and cooperative. The dress code is relaxed as long as it is appropriate for the occasion. The number of hours worked each week varies depending on the caseload.

Applying to CELA

CELA hires one articling student each year. If you are interested in applying to CELA, you should send your résumé with a covering letter, along with law school and undergraduate school transcripts to the Executive Director. The application process is conducted in the summer preceding the year in which your articles commence. The dates for submitting applications, scheduling interviews, and making offers are all set in accordance with the regulations published by the Law Society of Upper Canada.

Terms of contract

Articling at CELA generally commences immediately following the completion of the Bar Admission Course. The articling student is an employee of the Legal Aid Ontario and the salary is set each year accordingly. LAO contributes an additional 5.5% of the students wages towards an RRSP. There is also a benefits plan, which includes medical, dental and vision coverage, as well as life insurance. The articling student is entitled to 3.4 weeks vacation for a 12 month term.

Resources at CELA

CELA provides the articling student with his or her own office and computer, which is part of a networked system. The CELA library contains a range of texts on environmental and administrative law and civil procedure, a limited selection of law reports, as well as news clippings, periodicals, and government publications on most environmental topics. Furthermore, CELA has full access to Quicklaw, The Great Library at Osgoode Hall and the Bora Laskin Library at the University of Toronto are just a streetcar ride away.

Legal Action

CELA represents Ontario residents or groups in legal actions concerning a broad range of environmental law problems. Staff lawyers regularly appear in all levels of court and administrative hearings and have acted as interveners in many precedent-setting Court of Appeal and Supreme Court cases. CELA also provides free summary advice to the public at large.

Law Reform

The staff at CELA research and write numerous articles every year, recommending law reforms, critically evaluating new proposals, and participating in the development of new legislation.

Public Education and Outreach

CELA staff invest considerable time in public education. A knowledgeable public can play an important role in protecting and preserving a healthy and sustainable environment. In addition to public speaking activities CELA maintains a website www.cela.ca with a link to the Resource Library for the Environment and the Law.