

Olivia Baginski

This summer I had the opportunity to work for Peninsula Community Health Services (“PCHS”). Much of the work and tasks varied between Contract, Employment, Health, Labor, and Property Laws. I am grateful to continue working for the organization in the Fall.

PCHS is a non-profit organization in Bremerton, where I took the lovely ferry each day to attend work in person. The organization operates multiple accessible clinics and health centers with varying needs for the public at a rate that works for the patient.

Being a Legal Intern at PCHS is an in-house position, meaning I got to meet individuals from varying backgrounds outside the legal context and different department heads regularly. These individuals felt integrating their culture and values at PCHS were important, and that made me feel welcomed at the organization as much as the legal team did. PCHS hosted social events throughout the summer that made me feel more involved with my coworkers on a much more personal level as well. Majority of the employees feel aligned with their moral compass to work for PCHS, which meant so much for myself.

Outside of feeling welcomed from the community, I joined PCHS at a unique time where much of the work was pivoting to essentially creating a new firm within the company. PCHS just hired a new attorney to specifically curate the Medical Legal Partnership (“MLP”) program to specialize in civil legal needs for their patients. When a patient, after visiting one of the clinics, leaves needing certain civil needs, PCHS has begun a process in which it can help. Additionally, they have even continued to expand and even will begin to offer Section 8 housing to patients!

One of the projects I was so excited about was rewriting contracts for newly hired professionals with higher education degrees. This included considering what scope the organization has in terminating a professionally hired employee, and in turn what rights that employee has as well.

As I continue to work with PCHS, I will focus on a client’s needs for Public Benefits at a city, county, state, and/or federal level. The work will turn from working solely for PCHS as a client, to now its patients who utilize the organization and need assistance.

Overall, I have learned so much this summer. I am enthused to have had the opportunity to learn from varying legal fields and provide content that would be implemented within PCHS’ practices and for its numerous employees. The work will continue to be fulfilling as the organization expands and works towards an equitable, social justice mission.