

This summer, I had the opportunity to work in the Criminal Division of the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Specifically, I was in the Economic Crimes Unit. In general, the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office strives to do justice by supporting victims of crime and holding individuals who have committed crimes accountable. The Economic Crimes Unit handles a wide range of crimes from simple thefts to complex organized criminal activity related to fraud and identity theft.

Throughout my externship, I worked on a variety of different assignments. Above all, I spent most of my time writing memos. For my first assignment, I had the opportunity to write a memo on a real case that had not yet been initiated. Before writing a memo, I was told to compare and find the differences between a real court document to an amended fraudulent court document. Given the facts and evidence of the case, I was asked to determine whether the prosecutor could charge the suspect with forgery and/or identity theft. It was a full memo that resembled very similar to the memos I have written during my legal writing class. I had a lot of fun researching the statutes and cases. Unfortunately, I heard it would take many more years for this case to move forward to trial. However, it was comforting to hear from the prosecutors that my memo will be very helpful once the trial starts.

Currently, I am writing a second memo on a different case. This time, the case is about a stolen vehicle and the admission of evidence. I have been given the Certification for Determination of Probable Cause and the relevant police reports. Using these sources, my task is to help my supervisor determine whether to file charges against a suspect. This memo specifically focuses on the CrR 3.6 motion to suppress the evidence. Although I had no knowledge of CrR 3.6 motion before receiving this assignment, I am becoming an expert of it as I teach myself through research and writing the memo.

Additionally, I had opportunities to experience a snippet of the prosecutor's actual work. The witness list assignment was about a vehicle prowling incident. I read the police reports to identify different individuals who are involved in this case. Then, I created a potential witness list with detailed descriptions of individuals' activities. From that potential witness list, I analyzed the witnesses' contributions to the case to narrow down the number of witnesses. Finally, I compared the facts of my case to that of another case with the same suspect to decide whether I could advise the prosecutor to file a motion to join those two cases together.

My favorite assignment was listening to jail calls. Working for the prosecutors, I could never interact with the defendants other than watching them in trials. However, listening to the jail calls helped me to learn more about the defendants. It was very fulfilling to take notes on the jail calls and find evidence that would be used in a trial.

I was very fortunate to have a supervisor who encouraged me to watch trials. As a result, I learned so much about criminal trial procedures and listened to fantastic arguments. Not only did I watch a trial on economic crimes, but I also watched homicide, rape, and assault trials.

In addition to learning opportunities, I made many friends and valuable connections during the externship. This externship helped me to build my friendship with other Seattle University externs, interns, and externs from the University of Washington. Finally, I met plenty of fabulous prosecutors and paralegals who answered my questions and guided me throughout my externship journey.

It is true that the externship experience at the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office was quite challenging from time to time. Yet, the benefits I have gained from it are incomparable to the hardships I have overcome. Unlike law school, the externship taught me so much practical knowledge and skills. I want to thank PILF for supporting me to pursue this externship, and I hope to continue working in public service.