

# SPILG Fellowship: Frequently Asked Questions

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## **1) What is the SPILG Fellowship?**

The SPILG Fellowship (Suffolk Public Interest Law Group) is a Suffolk University Law School program that provides up to \$5000 for students working in a summer internship in public service with a non-profit or government organization in the United States. Judicial internships (including but not limited to FYSIP) DO NOT qualify. The SPILG fellowship is made up of two parts:

- 1) 25% (\$1,250) of the fellowship is funded by money raised by the SPILG organization through the SPILG auction and other sources. As a result, when a SPILG Fellowship is accepted, the recipient must accept responsibility for participation in the annual SPILG auction during the following academic year (see Question 10).
- 2) 75% (\$3750) of the fellowship comes from the Federal Work Study program (FWS), which is managed by the Student Financial Services Office.

Please note: some students selected for a SPILG fellowship may not be eligible for federal work study, or they may select not to receive the FWS for personal reasons. These students can receive the 25% stipend portion of the SPILG fellowship (\$1250). If you have questions about your eligibility for FWS, please ask your counselor in the Student Financial Services Office.

## **2) Who is eligible for the SPILG Fellowship and will all eligible students receive the fellowship?**

All Suffolk Law students in good standing who are not in their final semester are eligible to apply. To be eligible for the full amount (\$5000) students also must be able to complete a FAFSA application to qualify for Federal Work Study.

In the past we have been able to fund most applicants, but it depends on how many students apply. Students will be evaluated on the quality of their statement of interest. Grades/GPA will not be considered. Current 2L students will be given priority over 1L students, and 1L students who have already accepted a position will be given priority over those who have not yet done so.

Because we cannot always fund all students, it is very important to update Sarah Bookbinder if you decide that you do not in fact want the fellowship after you have submitted your application.

## **3) Do I need to have secured a public interest internship before I apply?**

No, you do not have to have accepted a position by the time you apply. You must accept a position by **April 27, 2018** in order to participate in the program.

## **4) How Do I Apply for the SPILG Fellowship and Federal Work Study Award?**

There are two requirements for a complete SPILG fellowship application. Both must be completed by **March 9, 2018**.

- 1) Submit a resume, two-page statement of interest (uploaded to Symplicity as a “cover letter” document), and the application form (uploaded to Symplicity as an “other document”) through the SPILG OCI tab on Symplicity. The application form is available in the document library and should be uploaded into Symplicity. The statement of interest should address your interest in public interest law and how this summer fits into your longterm career goals. Include any positions for which you have applied and are still being considered. If you have accepted a position already, please describe.
- 2) Submit a FAFSA for both 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. The FAFSA is available at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Students who are currently receiving federal student aid, including Federal Unsubsidized Direct Loans, have already completed the 2017/2018 FAFSA. If you have not already done so, you must complete the 2018/2019 by the March 9 deadline as well. International students are not able to complete the FAFSA and therefore are unable to apply for the FWS portion of the fellowship.

Please note: if you wish to be considered for the stipend ONLY (\$1250), you still must submit the statement of interest, resume and application form by March 9, 2018. You do not need to complete the FAFSA.

**5) How will I learn whether I have received the SPILG Fellowship?**

You will be notified around the beginning of April if you have been selected. If you are not selected in the initial awarding round, you will be placed on a waiting list and notified if funds become available. There are no interviews for the fellowship.

**6) What Paperwork Must Be Completed Prior to Starting Work in a Federal Work Study/SPILG position?**

After the awards have been made, there will be a required meeting which recipients must attend. We anticipate this meeting will be held in early April. The required employment paperwork specific to each recipient will be disseminated at that meeting, with instructions and deadlines for completion. All employment paperwork, including the name and contact information for your summer employer, must be returned to the Office of Financial Aid by **April 29, 2018**.

**7) Will receipt of SPILG and Federal Work Study Funds affect my financial aid eligibility?**

If you are awarded the total \$5,000 SPILG Fellowship, the amount of financial aid you are eligible to receive for the 2018/2019 academic year can be affected.

The Student Financial Services Office will consider the \$5000 award when determining your loan eligibility for 2018/2019. If you normally borrow up to the Cost of Attendance, the award will reduce your loan eligibility by \$5000 (the amount of the award) for the upcoming academic year.

But, while loan eligibility may be reduced, law students in this situation will still receive the same total amount of financial aid. By earning the \$5000 over the summer through SPILG instead of through loans, students can reduce the total amount of loans they need to borrow.

Speak to your counselor in the Student Financial Services Office if you have specific questions about your loan amounts, or if you plan to take a summer course. SPILG/FWS can reduce your eligibility for other forms of summer financial aid.

Please note: if you choose to only accept the \$1250 stipend, your financial aid will not be impacted.

**7) Can I accept another Suffolk University Fellowship in conjunction with SPILG?**

No. Law students are allowed to accept only one summer fellowship.

In addition, if you accept SPILG fellowship funding, you cannot be paid for the same hours by another source, including an outside fellowship or an employer.

**8) Can I receive the SPILG fellowship if I intend to transfer?**

No. The SPILG Fellowship is only intended for students who plan to attend Suffolk University Law School in the fall of 2018, and you will be required to sign a form stating this intent. If you have been accepted by another institution and intend to attend next year, please do not apply. If you decide to transfer in the middle of the summer you will stop receiving payments from Suffolk.

**9) What are the hourly and weekly work requirements for the SPILG fellowship?**

To qualify for the SPILG award, you must work 35 hours per week, for a minimum of eight weeks. To earn the full \$5000 you must work 357 hours throughout the summer. Exceptions may be allowed for internship programs that explicitly do not allow students to work fulltime.

The hourly rate will be \$14.00 per hour. You can only earn the follow amounts in the two pay-periods during the summer:

Summer I:	mid-May to June 30 <sup>th</sup>	\$2,300
Summer II:	July 1 to the end of August	\$2,700

If you do not earn the amounts specified by each of the dates indicated above, you will not be able to receive the total award. You cannot exceed your total award of \$5000.

The Student Financial Services Office will provide you with several methods of keeping track of your hours as you are working. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO TRACK YOUR HOURS.** If you work hours beyond those that may count towards the SPILG fellowship (for example, if you work 50 hours one week on a special project, or work two extra weeks at the end of the summer) you may apply for pro bono credit for the extra hours through the Office of Professional and Career Development.

Please note: if you receive only the \$1250 stipend, you will receive your payment in two equal amounts during each summer session after confirmation that you are in fact working in your internship. Since these funds are a stipend, there is no hourly rate and you do not need to track your hours for Suffolk University. No taxes will be withheld and you will receive a 1099 in early 2018.

**10) What are my obligations as a SPILG recipient in the fall of 2018?**

SPILG recipients must participate in 2018/2019 fundraising efforts for SPILG. The new SPILG Executive Board will set those requirements. In the past the requirements have included 1) securing no fewer than five different items for the SPILG auction, each valued at \$35 or more by the deadline set by the Executive Board, 2) completing ten volunteer hours at or in preparation for SPILG events 3) completing an online survey regarding your summer work experience, and 4) cooperating with SPILG to promote the fellowship.

**11) Who should I contact if I have questions?**

Contact Sarah Bookbinder in the Office of Professional and Career Development at 617-573-8093, or by email at [sbookbinder@suffolk.edu](mailto:sbookbinder@suffolk.edu) with questions about the application. Contact your counselor in the Student Financial Services Office with any questions about the impact of a summer FWS award on your financial aid package. This office can be reached at 617-573-8470, or by email at [lawfaid@suffolk.edu](mailto:lawfaid@suffolk.edu).