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16th Judicial Circuit
KENTON COUNTY
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PROSECUTORIAL EXTERN PROGRAM

“Pursue the truth, do justice, always be right, and never give up!”

Introduction

Welcome to the Prosecutorial Extern Program at the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office for the 16th Judicial Circuit of Kentucky. This office handles every felony criminal case in Kenton County, Kentucky. The offenses range from drug possession and thefts to rape and capital murder. About 3,000 cases per year come through the office, of which about 1,000 per year are indicted as felonies. The office consists of the Commonwealth's Attorney, 1st Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney, 8 Assistant Commonwealth's Attorneys, 2 Commonwealth's Detectives, 4 paralegals, and 1 victim's advocate. The Commonwealth's Attorney is an independent state official, elected to a 6 year term by the voters of Kenton County, Kentucky.

The Commonwealth's Attorney and his assistants are all attorneys licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. One Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney specializes in the prosecution of felony sex offenses and two Assistant Commonwealth's Attorneys prosecute primarily felony narcotics offenses. The remaining prosecutors are assigned to “general prosecution” of all other remaining offenses. The Commonwealth's Detectives are all sworn peace officers with arrest powers in Kenton County and service of process powers state wide. The detectives primarily function as the office's liaisons to the 21 different agencies with arrest powers in Kenton County. They also provide office security and occasionally conduct independent investigations. The victim's advocate works to keep victims informed about cases as well as available victim's services such as counseling and crime compensation funding.

There are 57 judicial circuits in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, each with its own judge(s) and Commonwealth's Attorney. Unlike other more rural judicial circuits, the 16th Judicial Circuit is comprised of only one county and is, therefore, commonly referred to as the Kenton County Courts. In Kentucky, courts are divided into the District, Circuit, and Family Courts. In Kenton County, there are 3 judges in District Court, 3 judges in Circuit Court, and 2 judges in Family Court. The Commonwealth's Attorney Office, with some exceptions, works only in the Circuit Court. In the Circuit Court, the First Division judge is the Hon. Martin Sheehan (Courtroom 6B), the Third Division judge is the Hon. Gregory Bartlett (Courtroom 7A), and the Fourth Division judge is the Hon. Patricia Summe (Courtroom 6A). (Second and Fifth Divisions are Family

Court Divisions).

Expectations

The Commonwealth's Attorney Office will attempt to be flexible in accommodating your schedule on special occasions. Generally speaking, however, you will be expected to keep a set schedule. Obviously, you can always work more hours if you so choose. You will also be expected to wear appropriate attire. "Business casual" is generally acceptable in the office. Courtroom attire is appropriate on any day that an extern knows he/she will be in court.

Court and Office Schedules

General criminal dockets are scheduled in the morning and afternoon, every Monday and most Tuesdays. These dockets will include arraignments, guilty pleas, sentencing, probation revocation hearings, and other miscellaneous motions/hearings.

Grand Jury is held every Thursday morning at 9:00 a.m. on the 8th floor of the courthouse. Grand Jury proceedings are conducted in secret. Though we will present a "mock grand jury" session for externs to observe, externs are not, by law, allowed to observe the Grand Jury proceedings unless they have obtained a "limited license" to practice law as a Special Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney pursuant to Supreme Court Rule (SCR) 2.540.

Preliminary Hearings are held at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 1A every Tuesday, Wednesday, and (usually) Thursday.

Trials generally start on Tuesdays or Wednesdays and go as long as needed. Externs are encouraged to observe trials as much as possible. Externs actively participating in trial pursuant to a SCR 2.540 "limited license" are expected to be present for the entire trial, even if missing class is required.

Staff meetings are held every Friday at 12:00pm.

For more assistance regarding our externship program and where to submit your resume, please contact Leanne Beck at lbeck@kentonprosecutor.com.