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## Rhode Island Sea Grant Law Fellow Program

### **What is the Law Fellow Program?**

The Rhode Island Sea Grant Law Fellow Program is an experiential education opportunity in which Law Fellows research and analyze marine law issues requested by outside professional organizations. Outside organizations requesting Law Fellow assistance may include government agencies, nonprofit groups, and corporations. Project topics cover a full range of ocean, coastal, and maritime topics and may focus on local, regional, national, or even international law.

### **What does a Law Fellow do?**

Law Fellows work on one assigned project. Law Fellows conduct legal research to answer the assigned question and draft a written memorandum or article presenting their analysis. Law Fellows work independently but with the oversight and guidance of a Marine Affairs Institute Staff Attorney. Depending on the project, students also may work closely with attorneys and professionals at the outside organization. Some Projects provide opportunities for oral presentations and publication of written materials.

### **Am I eligible to be a Law Fellow?**

Students can apply to serve as Law Fellows after they complete their first-year law school courses. Interested 1Ls should speak with Marine Affairs Institute staff about the program and participate in Marine Affairs Institute events during their 1L year.

### **How do I know what project I'll work on?**

Law Fellows are selected for particular projects by the Marine Affairs Institute staff through a competitive hiring process that considers their skills, interests, and availability.

### **Will I be paid or receive credit for my work as a Law Fellow?**

Law Fellows can either be paid OR receive course credit. Students electing to receive course credit may receive one or two credits for their work. Two-credit projects may be used to fulfill a writing requirement or experiential education requirement. Students interested in credit must contact Marine Affairs Institute Staff and receive approval for a project prior to the end of the add/drop period.

### **How many hours per week will I work?**

Students are required to dedicate 10 to 15 hours per week each semester to their assigned project. Law Fellows work on their own schedule and do not have assigned "office hours". Law students are not permitted to work more than 20 hours per week combined on all paid jobs when enrolled full-time.

### **How long do projects last?**

Most projects are completed in one semester, but some projects may extend over multiple semesters.

### **When and how can I apply to be a Law Fellow?**

At the start of each semester, eligible students will receive an email requesting applications for the Law Fellow Program. The call for applications will indicate how to apply, and applications will be accepted until one week after the end of the add/drop period. To apply, the following materials are required:

- A letter of interest indicating why you are interested in serving as a Sea Grant Law Fellow;
- A professional resume;
- Names and contact information for two professional references (academic references are accepted, but letters of recommendation are not requested); and
- A three to five-page writing sample, preferably other than a Legal Methods paper.

### **For more information, please contact:**

Marine Affairs Institute

Ph: 401-254-5392 or Email: [marineaffairs@rwu.edu](mailto:marineaffairs@rwu.edu)

Project Subject Matter	Requesting Organization(s)	Project Description
<b>Healthy Coastal Ecosystems</b>	The Nature Conservancy's Global Marine Team; Narragansett, RI	The Law Fellow analyzed the <i>Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference</i> policies and contributed research to a national shellfish conservation and restoration initiative.
	University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension, University of Rhode Island Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials, and Save The Bay; Narragansett and Providence, RI	The Law Fellow researched legal authority related to the production of the document, "A Local Official's Guide to Regulating Land Use in Wetland Buffers and High Water Tables to Protect Water Quality."
<b>Sustainable Coastal Development</b>	Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council; Wakefield, RI	The Law Fellow researched legal authorities in support of the development of the Ocean Special Area Management Plan (Ocean SAMP)
	Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council and the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office; Narragansett and Providence, RI	The Law Fellow researched the boundaries between private and public property for the state of Rhode Island to define the area of public beach access.
<b>Admiralty</b>	Quonset Development Corporation; North Kingstown, RI	The Law Fellow researched the processes that must be considered and followed when engaging in a marine construction or dredging project, specifically related to the expansion of the Davisville in North Kingstown, RI.
	Bluewater Wind; Hoboken, NJ	The Law Fellow researched the implication of U.S. Cabotage laws for offshore energy projects, primarily examining the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 (Jones Act) and the Passenger Vessel Services Act.
<b>Safe and Sustainable Seafood</b>	Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's Division of Fish & Wildlife, Rhode Island Attorney General's office, and the Rhode Island Commercial Fisherman's Association; Jamestown, Providence, and Kingston, RI	The Law Fellow researched the legality of the <i>Rhode Island Fluke Conservation Cooperative Sector Allocation Pilot Program</i> , a proposed pilot fishery management plan.
	National Marine Fisheries Service; Gloucester, MA	The Law Fellow researched fisheries agencies' use of reservation authority to prescribe fishways under Section 18 of the Federal Power Act.
<b>Hazard Resiliency in Coastal Communities</b>	Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency; Cranston, RI	The Law Fellow researched legal authorities to assist in the development of StormSmart Coasts Rhode Island.
	Marine Affairs Institute; Bristol, RI	The Law Fellow researched sea level rise, erosion and accretion of beachfront property, and public nuisance laws, and presented findings at <i>The Coastal Society Conference 2008</i> .