

During my internship at the Escambia County Juvenile Probation Office I learned many useful skills that will help me as I continue grow in the criminal justice field. I was exposed to almost every aspect of the Juvenile Justice system and I will take a lot of the knowledge with me and use it for the duration of my career. I was placed with a JPO by the name of Trevino Snowden and she did an excellent job of showing me the ropes. She is very organized and very knowledgeable about her job. I would recommend this placement site to any student and I would especially recommend Ms. Snowden as a placement supervisor.

During my internship at DJJ I was given my own case load of about 15 juveniles to manage. It taught me how to manage time and prioritize. I learned that you can not get everything done all at once even though you may want to. You must pace yourself or you will get burnt out very quick. I also learned the large amount of time that must go into individual case. It is almost impossible to perform a thorough job on each case. It is definitely quantity that counts and not quality in the juvenile probation office. I also learned that there is so much paperwork that goes into each case. Every aspect of the juvenile's life is covered and filed. I had a very difficult time managing and completing individually a lot of paper work because I was not computer trained. The DJJ system is very complicated to learn and I definitely needed some formal training in this aspect.

Before I began interning with DJJ, I underestimated the amount of work and knowledge that it takes to be a JPO in Florida. I expected it to be easy to be a JPO but I

was sorely mistaken. In Florida the JPO handles almost every aspect of the juvenile while on probation. They must handle anywhere from providing transportation for the family to making a recommendation to the court for sentencing. JPOs are also extremely overworked and underpaid but very dedicated. Some of them handle a wide variety of juveniles with caseloads of eighty or more juveniles. The majority of them work long hours and overtime just to get their work completed. I am surprised the department does not have a higher turnover rate due to the JPOs getting burnt out.

There were many tedious tasks that were assigned to me as an intern. When I was first given a new case I had to review the case file. Then I had to make appointments monthly to see the juveniles, whether it was at home, the office, school, or on the telephone. There are a certain amount of contacts that must be made according to the level of probation the juvenile is on. If the juvenile is on intensive there must be two face-to-face and one parent contact monthly. If the juvenile is on general then there must be one face-to-face and one parent contact monthly. If the juvenile is on demand then there is no certain amount of contacts monthly. I would say that this is one of the hardest tasks that a JPO has to do. Many times the probationers do not show up for appointments, move without notifying anyone, or do not attend school regularly so they are hard to find. There were many other times that the parents just did not feel like cooperating with the JPO so they do not bring them to appointments or to complete any court ordered sanctions. At this point the judge would have to step in because you cannot hold the juvenile responsible. The JPO almost has to play detective to track their probationers down. I feel that I did very well performing this task being as difficult as it is.

Overall I feel that my internship experience was excellent. The JPOs at DJJ seem to be very dedicated to their jobs. They were all very welcoming of an intern. This internship will definitely help anyone with their upcoming careers. They will learn every aspect of the juvenile justice system, from pre-sentencing to post-commitment. It will also help to enhance a resume when an intern goes to get a job. It will look good to see that you have case management experience and that you have actually worked in the field before graduation. With this experience a person can go work at Lakeview, be a case manager at a commitment program, or any social services agency. I would definitely recommend this placement site to anyone.