



OVERVIEW

A career working on behalf of the public good, more specifically for a nonprofit or governmental entity, offers a rewarding way to serve your community and live out your values. Resources exist to support your financial stability while pursuing this work. Planning, reflection, and periodic evaluations are needed to utilize all resources and to ensure you are staying on track.

Below is a summary of available resources. Contact Nikki Wu, Director of Student Financial Management, at nikki.wu@du.edu for support. You can also contact Prof. Alexi Freeman at alexi.freeman@du.edu to discuss your public sector goals and planning.

WHILE ENROLLED AT DENVER LAW

- [Named Scholarships](#): Beginning in February of your 1L year, you'll have the opportunity to apply for additional scholarships. These scholarships are competitively awarded based on financial need, academic merit, your involvement in law school, donor preferences, or a combination thereof. Awards are typically \$2,000-\$5,000.
- Paid Externships: Unlike many law schools, Denver Law allows students to receive both pay and credit simultaneously. While not all public sector placements pay, some will pay as you gain more experience. Either way, earning credit at the same time also allows you to access financial aid. Contact externships@law.du.edu with questions.
 - Search [CORE](#) and [Simplicity](#) for positions.
 - www.psjd.org also shares a range of externship opportunities, both paid and unpaid, in the public sector.
- Summer Funding: Every summer, Denver Law offers stipends for students externing, whether for credit or no credit, in unpaid public sector placements. Denver Law also facilitates other stipends for its students in related placements. For the most up-to-date stipends, visit <https://www.law.du.edu/resources/public-service-portal> and click Financial Support.
- [Student Assistance Fund](#): The Student Assistance Fund (SAF) provides financial assistance to students to help prevent emergency situations or unexpected financial needs from impacting a student's ability to fully participate in their experience at DU.
- Don't forget you can also access financial aid (loans) if you're enrolled in at least 4 credits. This also applies to summer semester.

FUNDS DURING BAR STUDY

While law school overall prepares you for the bar, intensive preparation for most people typically begins during your final year of law school. Though Bar Study Loans are available to support your living expenses during study, the higher interest rate and shorter repayment window makes them a more expensive form of funding. Consider these options before Bar Study loans:

- Bar Prep Materials: Catalyzed by a significant financial commitment from the Denver-based Sturm Family Foundation, the Sturm College of Law in Spring 2024 has entered into an agreement with Themis Bar Review to provide comprehensive and complimentary new resources for all JD students. The partnership with Themis is designed to support and empower students from orientation through the bar exam while, at the same time, addressing the significant costs typically associated with commercial bar review courses. May 2025 JD graduates will be offered Themis' full postgraduation bar preparation course – at *no cost*. Rising second- and third-year JD students will have access to Themis-provided resources for the duration of their time in the JD program and after graduation. And we will also be providing this new suite of resources to JD students who matriculate at the law school in fall 2024. Contact the academic dean (kevin.lynch@du.edu) for up-to-date information.
- Further, many of the major bar prep companies offer discounts or scholarships for students who have secured public sector jobs. If you don't see it on the website, ask the rep or reach out. Examples include: [Barbri](#), [Kaplan](#), [Quimbee](#), and [Themis](#).
- Maximize federal student aid options. This requires strict budgeting, but if you have student loan eligibility remaining, this is often at lower interest rates and more generous repayment terms than a dedicated Bar Study Loan.
- Apply for the SBA's Bar Exam Scholarship in April, if available.
- After exhausting the above options, students may turn to Bar Study Loans. Bar Study Loans are designed to assist with exam preparation courses, fees, and living expenses as you prepare for the Bar.
 - Several popular banks provide these products including several that offer traditional law school loans. These financial products allow qualified borrowers to borrow between \$1,000-\$15,000 subject to creditworthiness. Unlike Federal Student Aid options, Bar Study Loans typically consider your debt-to-income ratio, existing obligations (including outstanding student loans), income, and those factors of your cosigner (or lack thereof).
 - Applicants with concerns over credit worthiness may wish to apply with a cosigner, select a lower amount when applying, or both.

AFTER GRADUATION

There are three primary programs used to manage your federal student loan debt. Your federal student loans have a 6-month grace period. If you have undergraduate loans and have already utilized the grace period, you may request a forbearance (interest continues to accrue) or those loans will enter repayment the month following graduation.

1. [Income-Driven Repayment Plans](#) are available and tie your monthly loan payment to your income and family size. Note: Updated 3/4/2025: A federal court issued an injunction preventing the U.S. Department of Education from implementing the Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) Plan and parts of other income-driven repayment (IDR) plans. As a result, IDR applications are temporarily unavailable. For the most up to date information, visit studentaid.gov.
2. [PSLF, or Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#), forgives any remaining balance after 10 years of qualifying, on-time payments while employed full-time at an eligible non-profit or government employer. While contractors for government agencies are ineligible, employment is determined by the employer not the position you serve at the organization.
3. [DU's LRAP, Loan Repayment Assistance Program](#), can work in tandem to help meet your monthly student loan obligation for up to five of the ten years required for federal loan forgiveness through PSLF. The program offers direct deposits, issued twice annually, on a competitive basis to applicants that meet income and employment eligibility requirements.

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

One benefit of your DU education is access to our staff experts, even after graduation! Nikki Wu, Director of Student Financial Management, provides one-on-one appointments. Questions about all financial aid topics are welcome.

You also have access to Certified Financial Planners through the [AccessLex institute](#) as an alum to prepare for life after law school. For more information, please contact our dedicated representative, [Zachary Smith](#).

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