



Lawyering for
Reproductive
Justice

APPLICATIONS

FOR LAW STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES

2026-2028 Reproductive Justice Fellowship Program Application Information

The RJ Fellowship Program trains the next generation of lawyers to stop state violence in courts, capitol, and communities.

Sponsoring organization

We are lawyers and advocates who believe that everyone should be able to determine if, when, and how to build their families without barriers or punishment. If/When/How provides legal services, reshapes the law, and mobilizes lawyers and advocates for reproductive justice.

Reproductive Justice Fellowship Program

The Reproductive Justice Fellowship Program (RJFP) is a two-year program for emerging lawyers who are interested in gaining practical experience putting reproductive justice principles into direct legal service and action. As criminalization and surveillance of our pregnancies and bodily autonomy increase, we need more trauma-informed, client-centered lawyers who can fight state violence within the legal system, change policy, and meet people's human needs. Fellows are placed at host organizations, where they receive hands-on experience with direct legal services, policy advocacy, organizing, harm reduction, and client-centered lawyering. Placement organizations include family defense, public defense, and public policy programs. Fellows receive mentoring, professional development, skills-based training, and networking and community-building opportunities alongside their Fellowship cohort throughout the program term.

The RJ Fellowship is one of If/When/How's longest running programs and has jumpstarted the careers of over 100 lawyers since its inception in 2010. Past Fellows have gone on to work in civil rights litigation, reproductive rights public policy, direct legal services, and more. This newest phase of the Fellowship program aligns with our new strategic plan to mobilize a network of lawyers ready to challenge state violence with a reproductive justice lens. For more information about past RJ Fellows and placement organizations, please visit:

<http://www.ifwhenhow.org/about/fellowship-program/>.

Want to learn
more and apply?
Go to
[tinyurl.com/
IWHRJFellowship](https://tinyurl.com/IWHRJFellowship)

Environment

Each RJ Fellow will receive a **\$75,000 annual salary** and additional benefits, and will be placed at a selected placement organization from **September 2026 through August 2028**. As a law school graduate with an understanding of the reproductive justice framework, the RJ Fellow will assist in research, interpretation, and application of law to aid the placement organization's advocacy, coalition-building, and policy pursuits. Depending on placement organization needs, the RJ Fellow may also observe and/or contribute to the representation of individuals targeted by the criminal punishment system. Thus, the RJ Fellow will play an integral role in helping to influence public opinion, shape laws, and advance policy, aiming to advance reproductive justice for all people and use the tools of law to fight and reduce the harms of state violence for directly impacted families and communities. In addition, the RJFP provides rich opportunities for professional development, training, and networking in a supportive atmosphere. The RJ Fellows will be mentored by If/When/How staff and a local attorney and will participate in monthly workshops and attend conferences and other events with their cohort.

RJ Fellowship placements will be for two years (September 2026-August 2028), contingent on Fellows' ongoing fulfillment of program activities and placement organization requirements.

2026-2028 Fellowship Placements

RJ Family Defense Fellow:

The RJ Family Defense Fellow will further the placement organization's efforts to support parents and families impacted by the family policing system and other violent state systems. The RJ Family Defense Fellow may be responsible for conducting legal and policy research and analysis; educating policymakers, allies, and constituents; participating in advocacy and organizing efforts; and engaging with key coalitions. The RJ Family Defense Fellow may also assist in the representation of clients in family court or provide related legal services using an intersectional, holistic approach.

RJ Family Defense Fellows will be placed at **public defense offices based in New York City**. These placements operate as in-person workplaces with some opportunities for hybrid remote work. Selected candidates will be expected to live in the New York City metro area.

**Want to
learn more
and apply?
Go to
[tinyurl.com/
TK](https://tinyurl.com/TK).**

RJ Youth Access Fellow:

The RJ Youth Access Fellow will further the placement organization's reproductive justice agenda as it relates to securing the rights, health, and bodily autonomy of young people, which may include access to abortion, birth control, and parenting with dignity. The RJ Youth Access Fellow may be responsible for conducting legal and policy research and analysis; educating policymakers, allies, and constituents; participating in advocacy and organizing efforts; and presenting at conferences or trainings. The RJ Youth Access Fellow may also serve a key role in working for policy change that supports marginalized communities by representing the placement organization in coalitions; meetings with local, state, and regional officials; and strategic collaborations to advance legislative priorities.

RJ Youth Access Fellows will be placed at **Jane's Due Process** (based in Austin, TX) or **National Center for Youth Law** (headquartered in Oakland, CA). Jane's Due Process operates as a remote workplace, but the fellow will be expected to live in Texas, with possible in-person work engagements in Austin, TX during the fellowship term. NYCL operates as a remote workplace, and selected candidates may work from any U.S. state.

Qualifications

- J.D. required by May 2026 (bar admission anywhere in U.S. by fall 2026 preferred, not required);
- Knowledge of U.S. reproductive rights law and the reproductive justice framework;
- Experience working with diverse communities, particularly communities of color and the LGBTQ+ community;
- Demonstrated commitment to social justice and racial equity;
 - For Family Defense Fellowships: knowledge of/experience with criminalization and a commitment to representing individuals and communities targeted by the family policing system;
 - For Youth Access Fellowships: knowledge of/experience with barriers faced by young people in navigating health care and legal systems, and a commitment to supporting reproductive justice for all young people;
- Superior written and oral communication skills;
- Comfort and familiarity with small non-profit environment, ability to use limited resources efficiently and effectively;
- Relevant volunteer, work, and life experiences before, during, or after law school; and
- Commitment to spending two years (September 2026 through August 2028) at fellowship placement and to participating in all program activities;
 - For Family Defense Fellowships: willingness to live in the New York City metropolitan area during the fellowship term;
 - For Youth Access Fellowships: willingness to live in Texas (for Jane's Due Process) or work remotely (NYCL) during the fellowship term.

Compensation

Each RJ Fellow will receive an **annual salary of \$75,000**, paid out from the placement organization, and a benefits package including health insurance coverage and paid time off, to be determined and distributed by the placement organization. Fellows also receive additional benefits, such as professional development funds, from If/When/How.

Application

Applicants must meet the necessary qualifications and must currently be in their final year of law school or a recent law school graduate (post-2019). Applicants will be considered for all of the available fellowship placements (RJ Family Defense and Youth Access Fellowships) when they submit one online application. Supplemental questions will appear on the online application form to allow applicants to express interest in a particular fellowship program and/or placement organization.

All RJFP applications must be submitted completely online:

<https://www.ifwhenhow.org/rjfp-application/>

If/When/How is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to a diverse, multicultural work environment. People of color, people with disabilities, and those who identify as LGBTQ are strongly encouraged to apply.

Please have all of the necessary documents (in PDF format) ready to upload at the time you fill out the online form – you will not be able to save the form and go back to it later.

- ☐ Online Application Form – [fill out online](#)
- ☐ Personal Statement (PDF)
- ☐ Résumé (PDF)
- ☐ Writing Sample (PDF)
- ☐ List of Recommenders/References (PDF)
- ☐ One (1) Letter of Recommendation (PDF) (may be emailed to RJFP@ifwhenhow.org separately by recommender, if needed)
- ☐ Optional: Law School Transcript (official or unofficial) (PDF)

DEADLINE: Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials as soon as possible for consideration for all positions.

Questions by email only: RJFP@ifwhenhow.org. Due to the high volume of applications we receive, we may not be able to notify applicants who are not awarded a Fellowship position.

Instructions for preparing application materials

Fill out the Online Application form, available here:

<https://www.ifwhenhow.org/rjfp-application/>

Personal statement (PDF): please write a letter of interest (5-page limit) explaining why you would like to be selected as a RJ Fellow and how your personal career goals, as well as the reproductive justice movement, would be advanced through your participation in the RJFP. Please include a discussion of what reproductive justice means and why it is important to you. Be sure to include any information about your background, identity, and/or lived experiences, as well as your future plans, that you consider relevant to your ability to be an effective reproductive justice advocate. This should be more in depth than a cover letter. Please include information that may assist If/When/How in determining potential placement organizations for you in the event that you are selected as a Fellow, such as your interest in focusing on a particular issue(s) (e.g., reproductive health care access for young people, family defense) or connection to a particular community or geographic area (e.g., Texas and/or the southern U.S., specific communities in New York). Preferences will be taken into account, but expressing an interest in specific issues or location does not guarantee placement at a particular organization.

Résumé (PDF): please provide your current résumé indicating your employment history; your education (including participation in any extracurricular activities, clinics, law journals, etc.); any published materials or other significant original research papers; any special honors, awards, scholarships, or fellowships; clerkships; volunteer experiences; and memberships in organizations or community activities in which you have been involved, including leadership roles. Include any other trainings or skills relating to reproductive justice (e.g. blog writing, doula training).

Writing sample (PDF): please provide a brief (10-page limit) sample of published or unpublished academic work or article, rather than legal memorandum or brief, concerning subject matter relevant to reproductive justice (for example, reproductive rights and justice, civil rights and liberties, Constitutional law, family law, health care policy, etc.). If you do not have an appropriate, existing writing sample, please write a brief (10-page limit) essay analyzing a current reproductive justice issue and how legal advocates can impact relevant law and policy.

One (1) letter of recommendation (PDF): one letter of recommendation is required. We suggest that the letter come from someone who can provide information about your interest and experience in reproductive justice, your skills and abilities that would make you a good fit for a fellowship, and/or any other knowledge they have of your capacity to thrive as a reproductive and social justice advocate. Your letter of recommendation may be uploaded to the online application form (to expedite application review) or your recommender may email their letter directly to RJFP@ifwhenhow.org. Please note: recommender(s) may be contacted by If/When/How to provide additional information.

List of recommenders/references (PDF): please provide the contact information (name, telephone number, email, explanation of relationship to you) for the person who will be writing your letter of recommendation. Please also provide the contact information for one additional reference.

Optional law school transcript (PDF): you may upload a copy of your law school transcript (official or unofficial). Submitting a transcript submission is not required.

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