

Report from Legal and Clerks Services, Legal Services

Date of Report: September 4, 2019

Date of Meeting: September 16, 2019

Report Number: LCS-B031-2019

File: 10.10.99

Subject: Early Budget Approval – Law Practice Program Student, Legal Services

Recommendation

That the budget for the hiring of a Law Practice Program student for the period January – April, 2020, in the amount of \$15,000 receive early budget approval for the 2020 operating budget.

Background

Ryerson University offers an innovative alternative to traditional articling for law school graduates called the Law Practice Program (LPP). The program consists of a four-month training component (August – December) and a four-month work placement (January – April). The program is a strategic partnership between the University, the Law Society of Ontario and the Ontario Bar Association.

Report

Legal Services is currently resourced with three lawyers with 29 years, 8 years and 6 years' practice experience. While much of the workload of Legal Services requires attention by experienced lawyers there is also a significant number of matters that could be more effectively delegated with supervision to a more junior person with legal training but limited practical experience. Such matters would include conducting legal research, review of contracts prior to execution, preparing first drafts of agreements and court materials and attendance at routine Provincial Offences Court appearances. With the assistance of a law student the lawyers in Legal Services would be able to redirect their attention to the more complex matters handled by the department better utilizing their skills and abilities.

Intake for LPP work placements occurs in two rounds. The first intake took place in June for the first round of hiring. There is a second intake which commenced in August with applications to be forwarded to employers in mid-September and interviews and hiring scheduled in mid to late September. The placement itself would commence in January 2020. In order to meet the program deadline, the City Solicitor has submitted an employer profile advertising a position with Legal Services. Early budget approval is necessary if the department is to follow through with the next step as the hiring commitment would need to be made in October. If early budget approval is not provided the work placement offer will be withdrawn.

Financial Implications

The salary offered for an LPP student for four months is \$15,000, which is based on current rates in the Niagara Region for similar placements.

Prepared and Submitted by:

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