

HARRY CRITCHLEY PRISON AND POLICE JUSTICE FUND

Harry Critchley was a dedicated advocate, lawyer, and community leader whose work transformed the landscape of prison and policing oversight in Nova Scotia. His unwavering commitment to justice, education, and social change continues to inspire those who had the privilege of knowing him.

Harry's passion for justice took root during his time at the University of King's College in Halifax. While studying Contemporary Studies, he introduced a community-based Humanities curriculum to the Burnside Jail, marking the beginning of his lifelong commitment to working alongside incarcerated individuals.

In 2017, Harry co-founded the East Coast Prison Justice Society (ECPJS), a groundbreaking organization advocating for the rights and dignity of incarcerated people in Nova Scotia. His leadership in civil oversight of jail conditions and police accountability, including contributions to the Defunding the Police report and the Mass Casualty Commission hearings, was instrumental in shaping policy and public discourse.

Harry also served on the board of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia (EFMNS), where he expanded services to Truro and helped develop programs addressing gender-based violence. During the early days of COVID-19, he played a key role in securing the release of nearly half the provincially incarcerated population and was a driving force behind the creation of a sobering centre as an alternative to police lockup, advocating in memory of Corey Rogers.

After earning a law degree from the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie in 2022, Harry was called to the bar in 2023 and joined Dartmouth's Nova Scotia Legal Aid office. It was, in his words, his "dream job," a perfect fit for his deep commitment to supporting marginalized and impoverished communities. His impact was widely recognized, including being awarded the Justice Abella Prize for his contributions to equity and social justice.

While Harry's professional achievements were immense, he was, above all, a devoted husband, father, son, and friend. He found his greatest joy in family life, embracing every moment with warmth and love.

Harry's legacy lives on through the ongoing work of PATH Legal, ECPJS, EFMNS, and all those he inspired to fight for a more just world. To honour his life, the Harry Critchley Prison and Police Justice Fund was created. This fund is dedicated to continuing his mission, ensuring that his vision for a fairer and more compassionate society endures.

ABOUT THE FUND

Harry's Fund sustains the integrated prison and policing oversight work that Harry was so passionate about, and it ensures that new lawyers can continue carrying forward his values of patience, helpfulness, passion, and commitment to systemic change.

Each year, the Harry's Fund will support the hiring of a paid, full-time articling student at PATH Legal.

This accomplishes two goals:

1. Support new lawyers in gaining direct experience in police and prison law at a social justice law firm.
2. Build a living legacy through an alumni network of lawyers committed to the same ethic Harry embodied: principled advocacy, solidarity, and dedication to the dignity of all people.

Harry believed strongly in bridging post-secondary education with community service, and this fund allows us to do just that: connecting law graduates to meaningful, justice-centered articling opportunities that might otherwise not exist.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

PATH Legal

PATH Legal is a community-based law firm in Halifax, Nova Scotia, dedicated to advancing justice for people affected by prisons and policing.

PATH was established in 2021 through the collaborative work of community advocates, including Harry Critchley, who recognized the urgent need for dedicated legal services in this area. Before PATH, there was no specialized organization in Atlantic Canada practicing prison and police law. Harry and others worked to fill this gap, building a practice that integrates individual client advocacy with systemic litigation and reform.

Since its founding, PATH has taken on a wide range of cases, including:

- **Prison law:** habeas corpus applications, parole hearings, disciplinary hearings, constitutional challenges, and advocacy for incarcerated people.
- **Police accountability:** representing individuals in complaints against police, advancing systemic oversight reforms, and challenging unlawful policing practices.
- **Constitutional and systemic litigation:** test case litigation to improve conditions of confinement and expand rights protections.
- **Negligence litigation:** representing individuals and groups of people who have been harmed by systems and establishments
- **And more:** technology facilitated violence, sexual assault, class actions, human rights, etc.

PATH operates with a team-based, client-centered approach, ensuring that every person has access to dignified, principled advocacy. The organization also prioritizes mentorship and training for students and junior lawyers, recognizing the importance of building the next generation of prison and police law advocates.

Harry's vision was integral to PATH's creation and growth. His commitment to community-first lawyering continues to shape the firm's culture and practice.

East Coast Prison Justice Society (ECPJS)

The East Coast Prison Justice Society is a grassroots organization that advocates for accountability, transparency, and human rights in correctional and policing systems across Atlantic Canada.

Founded in 2017, ECPJS grew out of a recognition that prison and police oversight in Nova Scotia was inadequate and fragmented. Community members, including lawyers, advocates, formerly

incarcerated people, and family members, came together to create a coalition capable of pressing for systemic reform.

Harry played a central role in ECPJS from its earliest days. As co-chair, he helped transform it into a vital hub for advocacy and collaboration, connecting grassroots activists with lawyers, academics, and policymakers. Under Harry's leadership, ECPJS advanced key reforms, such as:

- Pushing for mandatory reviews of deaths in custody.
- Advocating for sobering centres as alternatives to police cells for people in crisis.
- Raising awareness of human rights violations inside prisons and calling for independent oversight mechanisms.
- Building connections between students and the prison justice movement, fostering mentorship and research opportunities.

ECPJS remains committed to carrying forward this work, ensuring that people impacted by prisons and policing have a voice, and that governments remain accountable to the communities they serve.

Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia (EFMNS)

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia is a non-profit organization that supports women, girls, and gender-diverse people who are criminalized or at risk of criminalization.

EFMNS provides a wide range of programs and services, including housing supports, court navigation, advocacy, and programs addressing gender-based violence, human trafficking, and systemic barriers. The Society also engages in systemic advocacy, working to dismantle structural inequalities and advance alternatives to incarceration.

EFMNS was one of the first organizations to benefit from Harry's vision and leadership. His work with EFMNS helped expand programming, secure funding for critical initiatives like the Girls Against Trafficking and Exploitation program, and build capacity for long-term systemic advocacy.

ARTICLING AT PATH LEGAL (2027 START DATE)

The articling student sponsored by the Harry Critchley Prison and Police Justice Fund will spend their articling year at PATH Legal in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This is a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in prison and police law, systemic advocacy, and community-first legal practice.

What the Role Entails

As an articling student at PATH, you can expect to:

- Work directly with clients on prison law matters, including disciplinary hearings, parole hearings, and habeas corpus applications.
- Contribute to constitutional and systemic litigation, such as test cases challenging conditions of confinement or unlawful correctional practices.
- Support police accountability efforts, including complaints, reviews, and community advocacy around oversight and reform.
- Engage with community partners, including non-profits, advocacy groups, and grassroots organizations, to ensure legal strategies are informed by lived experience.
- Develop practical legal skills in research, drafting, oral advocacy, and client-centered representation.

You will work as part of a small, collaborative team that values independence, compassion, and a commitment to systemic change. The work is often fast-paced, legally complex, and emotionally demanding, but also deeply rewarding.

Qualities for Success

The articling environment at PATH is unique. Successful applicants will demonstrate:

- Commitment to social justice and systemic advocacy.
- Independence and self-motivation, with the ability to manage a varied caseload.
- Teamwork and collaboration, contributing to a supportive, community-first workplace.
- Compassion and resilience, recognizing the challenges of working alongside marginalized communities and incarcerated people.
- Creativity and flexibility, with openness to finding innovative legal and advocacy solutions.

Realistic Expectations

We want to be transparent about what articling at PATH looks like:

- **Hire-back:** As a small, non-profit law firm, PATH is unlikely to have the capacity to hire back after articles. For most students, this will be a stepping stone to other work in social justice or legal advocacy, not a long-term job placement.
- **Networking and mentorship:** PATH's strength lies in its connections. You will work alongside, and build relationships with, people at EFMNS, ECPJS, NSLA, and other organizations, creating a network of atypical but powerful opportunities in law, advocacy, and policy. Connections go beyond the social justice industry too. Board members for community organizations are ripe with lawyers practicing all different areas of law
- **Professional development:** You will leave articles with practical courtroom and litigation experience, exposure to systemic reform strategies, and a strong professional profile in social justice law.
- **Transferable skills:** Although the work is specialized, the skill set you build is highly portable across legal and quasi-legal roles. Expect to develop:
 - Litigation & tribunal practice: file management, evidence strategy, submissions, oral advocacy, and negotiation.
 - Client-facing excellence: trauma-informed interviewing, cultural humility, plain-language advice, and boundary-setting.
 - Investigation & fact-development: document requests, data/evidence synthesis, affidavit drafting, and expert coordination.
 - Writing for different audiences: memos, pleadings, advocacy letters, etc.
 - Project & time management: juggling urgent matters with long-horizon test cases; prioritization and deadline discipline.
 - Partnership building: working with community agencies, academics, and service providers to craft practical remedies.

Why This Placement is Special

Most articling positions in Nova Scotia do not provide the chance to focus on prison law, police accountability, and constitutional litigation. At PATH, your work will directly contribute to advancing justice for some of the most marginalized communities in the province.

This articling placement is not just about building legal skills, it is about carrying forward Harry's legacy: patient, principled, community-first advocacy that challenges inequality and insists on dignity for all.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & TIMELINE

What to Submit

1. *Application form (attached to the end of this document)*
2. *Resume / CV*
3. *Academic Transcripts*
4. *Personal Statement (in lieu of cover letter) (max. 1,000 words)*
 - Share how you were introduced to prison and/or police justice advocacy.
 - Explain why you want to continue in this work.
 - Reflect on how your experiences and values align with the legacy of Harry Critchley and the mission of PATH Legal.
 - Note: your personal statement can be addressed to Emma Halpern and Mike Dull.
5. *Writing Sample*
 - Submit a 5- to 10-page writing sample taken from a legal memo, factum, statement of claim/defence, or similar document from law school.
 - Please do not submit essays. We are looking for practical legal writing.
6. *References (at least 1, up to 3)*
 - Provide one to three references. There is no criteria as to who needs to be a reference, but some examples may be academic (professors, practitioners, etc.), professional (employers, mentors, etc.), and/or community reference (volunteer organizations, spiritual leaders, etc.).
 - References can be submitted as letters or offered by phone call.

How to Submit

- Combine your application materials into a single PDF file (except references, which may be submitted separately).
- Email to Emma Arnold at e.arnold@pathlegal.ca with the subject line: *Application – Harry Critchley Prison and Police Justice Fund [Your Name]*

Selection Process

- All applications will be reviewed by a selection committee made up of representatives from PATH Legal and ECPJS.
- Selected candidates will be invited for an interview. A second interview may be requested.

Timeline

- Applications Open: November 17, 2025
- Applications Close: January 19, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. (noon) Atlantic Time
- Interviews Conducted: Saturday, February 7, 2026
- Offer Day: Friday, February 13, 2026
- Articling Term Begins: Spring/Summer 2027

EQUITY & ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The Harry Critchley Prison and Police Justice Fund is committed to advancing equity, inclusion, and accessibility. This fund honours Harry's lifelong dedication to community-first advocacy and his insistence that those most affected by injustice must be at the centre of efforts to address it.

We strongly encourage applications from candidates who:

- Identify as Indigenous, Black, racialized, or 2SLGBTQIA+
- Are people with disabilities
- Have lived experience of incarceration, policing, or criminalization
- Come from communities underrepresented in the legal profession

We also recognize that traditional application processes can present barriers. For that reason, we welcome you to let us know any accommodation you need, and we will try our best to work with you to ensure the process is inclusive.

If you have questions about accommodations or submission options, please reach out to Emma Arnold at e.arnold@pathlegal.ca.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We know that applying for articles can feel overwhelming, and we want to make the process as transparent and supportive as possible. Below are answers to common questions about the articling position and application process. If you have other questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Finances

What is the salary for this articling position?

PATH offers a competitive articling salary that is in line with other law firms in Halifax. We review compensation against local market ranges to ensure fairness and transparency.

Does PATH cover bar admission costs?

Yes. PATH will pay for all required costs related to the bar course and your call to the bar in Nova Scotia, including mandatory program fees and materials. We will also coordinate your work schedule so you can meet all course requirements.

Supervision & Training

Who will supervise me?

You will be directly supervised by a lawyer at PATH Legal who is approved by the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society. They will meet with you regularly to review files, provide feedback, and support your learning.

Is there a formal training program?

There isn't a formal training week, but you will receive structured orientation to PATH's work, our systems, and ongoing mentorship from staff and community partners. You will learn through a mix of shadowing, independent file work, and collaborative projects.

Day-to-Day Work

What does a typical week look like?

Expect a mix of client meetings, prison visits, legal research, drafting documents, and preparing for or attending hearings. Some days are spent in the office writing, others are spent in court or at correctional institutions.

How many files will I work on?

You will likely carry a varied caseload of active files, along with involvement in broader systemic projects. Caseloads are manageable and designed to balance learning with real responsibility.

Will I appear in court or tribunals myself?

Yes, articling students at PATH often have the chance to represent clients in disciplinary hearings, parole board hearings, or motions under supervision, depending on comfort and readiness.

Workplace Environment

What is the PATH team like?

PATH is a small, close-knit team. The work is independent and self-directed, but you will also collaborate closely with colleagues. The office culture values compassion, flexibility, and community-first practice.

How is emotional well-being supported?

Working with incarcerated clients can be difficult. PATH emphasizes a supportive team environment, peer check-ins, and space to debrief challenging cases. We encourage healthy boundaries and work-life balance.

Professional Development

Will I have networking opportunities?

Absolutely. You will work closely with community organizations like EFMNS, ECPJS, and NSLA, and connect with lawyers, advocates, and academics across Canada. These networks often lead to post-articling opportunities.

What career paths do PATH students pursue afterward?

Most articling students move into roles at legal aid, non-profits, policy organizations, or academic programs. PATH articles are a strong foundation for a career in social justice law, even though hire-back is not likely.

Will I be able to publish or contribute to systemic work?

Yes. Depending on the projects underway, you may have opportunities to co-author legal submissions, policy reports, or research papers.

Application Process

Are references required?

Yes, we require at least one reference; however, you may submit up to three. You can choose those in your life that can speak best to how you would contribute to PATH Legal as an articulated clerk.

What kind of writing sample should I include?

Please include a legal memo, factum, or other piece of legal writing from law school. It does not need to be perfect, we just want to see how you approach legal analysis and writing.

What will the interview be like?

Interviews will be conducted by representatives from PATH and ECPJS. Questions will focus on your values, experiences, and interest in prison/police law. We want to get a sense of who you are and how you would approach the work.

Will I get feedback if I am not selected?

Yes. Any applicant who reaches the interview stage can request feedback after the process concludes.

Logistics

Where will I be working?

The articling position is based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with some travel to correctional institutions across the province. Even though there may be travel, you do not need access to a vehicle. Please note that PATH's offices are located downtown and do not have reserved parking.

Is remote or hybrid work possible?

While much of the work is in-person, there will be flexibility for remote research and writing days.

When does the articling term begin and end?

The position runs for the full articling year required by the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society, usually beginning in June.

Who is technically my employer?

The articling position is hosted at PATH Legal, funded through the Harry Critchley Prison Justice Fund in partnership with community organizations.

More Questions?

If you have any outstanding questions about the position, Harry's Fund, or the application process, please contact Emma Arnold at e.arnold@pathlegal.ca.

APPLICATION FORM

Full name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Language Proficiency

Please indicate whether you have any proficiency in the following languages by choosing one of the following for each: fluent, proficient, intermediate, conversational, basic, N/A.

	French	Mi'kmaw	Sign Language	Other: _____
Writing				
Oral				
Reading				

Reference #1 (Required)

Full name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please select one: ☐ *Will send directly to PATH* ☐ *Phone call* ☐ *Included in application*

Reference #2 (Optional)

Full name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please select one: ☐ *Will send directly to PATH* ☐ *Phone call* ☐ *Included in application*

Reference #3 (Optional)

Full name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please select one: ☐ *Will send directly to PATH* ☐ *Phone call* ☐ *Included in application*