

**UNITED STATES
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**



Overview of the USPTO Law School Clinic Certification Program

Office of Enrollment and Discipline

United States Patent and Trademark Office

UNITED STATES
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



Law School Clinic Certification Program

- Allows students in a participating law school's clinic program to practice before the USPTO under the strict guidance of a Law School Faculty Clinic Supervisor
 - The OED Director grants participating law students limited recognition to practice before the USPTO in patents/trademarks.
- Participating in the program gives real-world experience to clinic students while providing IP pro bono services to the community
- Benefits for students, schools, the USPTO, and entrepreneurs and inventors seeking legal representation



History of the program

- Pilot program from 2008 to 2014
- H.R. 5108 sponsored by two U.S. Representatives
- Signed into law in on December 16, 2014
 - Required the establishment of regulations for application to and participation in the program
 - 37 CFR §§ 11.16 (admission) & 11.17 (participation)
 - Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued December 16, 2015
 - Final Rule published May 27, 2016

Participating law school requirements

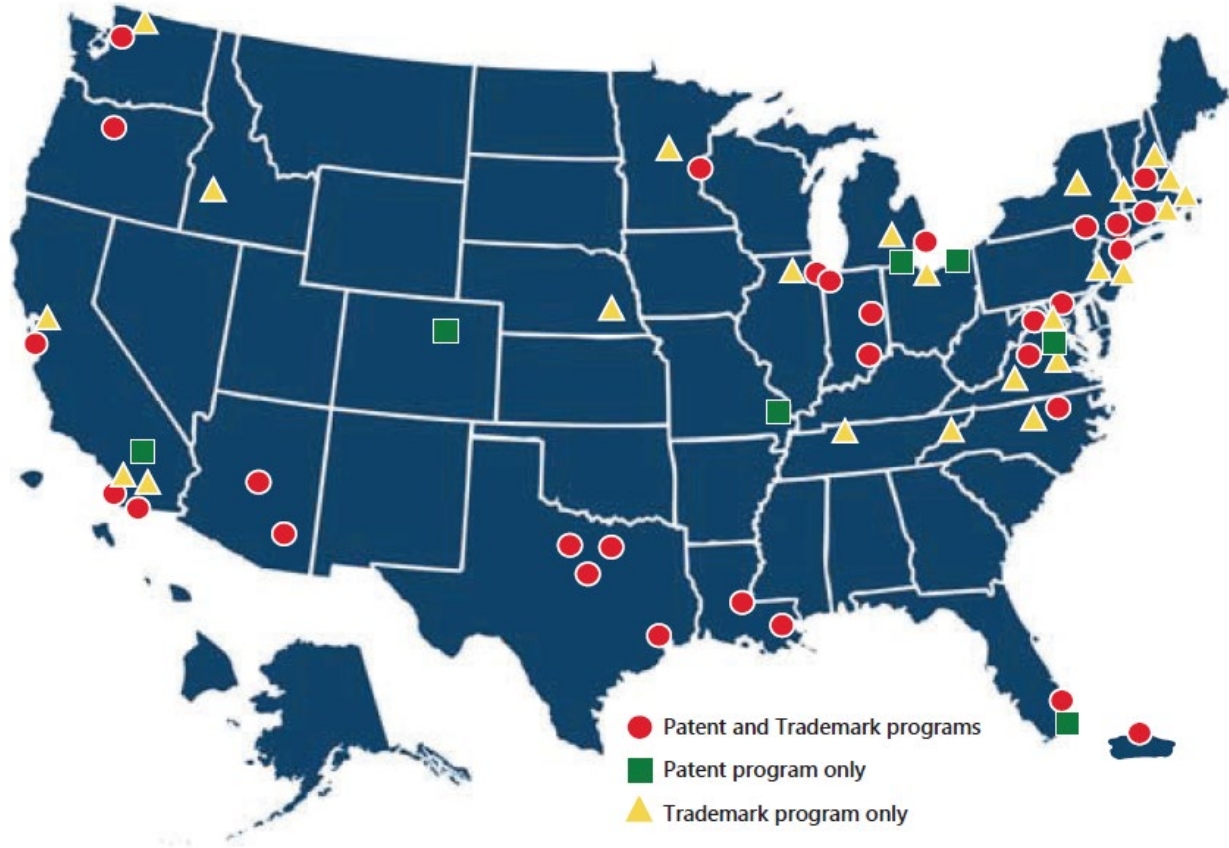
- ABA accredited law school
- Must provide services pro bono to the public
- Must have protocol for seamless representation of clients
- Must have approved Faculty Clinic Supervisor
- Must comply with reporting requirements

Benefits to USPTO and inventors

- **Impact for inventors**
 - Opportunity to work with experienced patent practitioners/faculty clinic supervisors and law students
 - Benefit from IP pro bono services
 - May benefit from expedited review of his/her applications by the USPTO
- **Impact for the USPTO**
 - Increased participation in the patent system by increasing patent application filings
 - Improved patent quality
 - Supplements pro se (filing on your own) assistance efforts



Current nationwide coverage



Nationwide coverage cont.

- Arizona**
- Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law
 - University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law

- California**
- ▲ California Western School of Law
 - Lincoln Law School of San Jose
 - Thomas Jefferson School of Law
 - ▲ University of California, Irvine School of Law
 - University of California, Los Angeles School of Law
 - University of San Diego School of Law
 - ▲ University of San Francisco School of Law

- Colorado**
- University of Colorado Law School

- Connecticut**
- University of Connecticut School of Law

- District of Columbia**
- American University, Washington College of Law
 - Howard University School of Law
 - ▲ The George Washington University School of Law

- Florida**
- Florida International University College of Law
 - University of Miami School of Law

- Idaho**
- ▲ University of Idaho College of Law

- Illinois**
- ▲ Northwestern Pritzker School of Law
 - University of Illinois Chicago School of Law

- Indiana**
- Indiana University Maurer School of Law
 - Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law
 - University of Notre Dame Law School

- Louisiana**
- Southern University Law Center
 - Tulane University Law School

- Maryland**
- University of Maryland School of Law

- Massachusetts**
- ▲ Boston College Law School
 - ▲ Northeastern University School of Law
 - Suffolk University Law School
 - ▲ Western New England University School of Law

- Michigan**
- University of Detroit Mercy School of Law
 - ▲ University of Michigan Law School
 - Wayne State University Law School

- Minnesota**
- Mitchell Hamline School of Law
 - ▲ University of St. Thomas School of Law

- Missouri**
- Washington University in St. Louis School of Law

- Nebraska**
- ▲ University of Nebraska College of Law

- New Hampshire**
- ▲ UNH Franklin Pierce School of Law

- New Jersey**
- ▲ Rutgers Law School

- New York**
- Brooklyn Law School
 - Fordham University School of Law
 - New York Law School
 - ▲ Syracuse University College of Law

- North Carolina**
- North Carolina Central University School of Law
 - ▲ University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Law

- Ohio**
- Case Western Reserve University School of Law
 - ▲ University of Akron School of Law

- Oregon**
- Lewis & Clark Law School

- Pennsylvania**
- ▲ University of Pennsylvania Law School

- Puerto Rico**
- University of Puerto Rico School of Law

- Rhode Island**
- ▲ Roger Williams University School of Law

- Tennessee**
- ▲ University of Tennessee College of Law
 - ▲ Vanderbilt Law School

- Texas**
- Baylor Law School
 - South Texas College of Law Houston
 - Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law
 - Texas A&M University School of Law

- Washington**
- ▲ Seattle University School of Law
 - University of Washington School of Law

- Virginia**
- George Mason University, Antonin Scalia Law School
 - ▲ Liberty University School of Law
 - ▲ University of Richmond School of Law

States with a clinic in the program

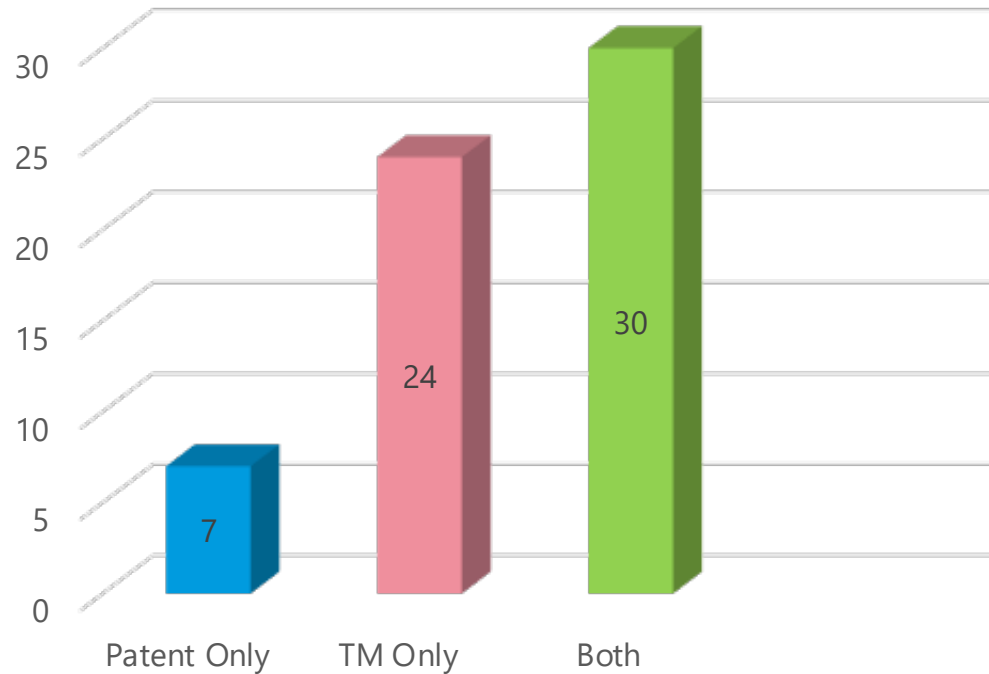
29 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- Washington



Program overview

- Currently, 61 law schools are in the Program from all across the United States



Finding and contacting a participating law school

The screenshot shows the top portion of the USPTO website. On the left is the 'uspto' logo and the text 'UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE'. On the right are links for 'About Us', 'Jobs', 'Contact Us', and 'MyUSPTO', along with a search bar containing 'Search uspto.gov'. Below this is a navigation menu with tabs for 'Patents', 'Trademarks', 'IP Policy', and 'Learning and Resources', and a 'Find It Fast' button. A breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > Learning and Resources > Patent and Trademark Practitioners > Law School Clinic Certification Program'. To the right of the breadcrumb are 'Share' and 'Print' icons.

Intellectual property legal assistance programs

Patent pro bono program

Pro Se assistance program

Scam prevention

Law school clinic program

Law School Clinic Certification Program

The Law School Clinic Certification Program includes over 60 participating law school clinics that provide legal services pro bono to the public, including to inventors, entrepreneurs, and small businesses. Participating law school clinics provide patent and/or trademark legal services to qualified members of the public who are accepted as a client of a clinic. Each participating law school has requirements for accepting new clients and accepts new clients at their discretion.

[Expand all](#) | [Collapse all](#)

Get help from a law school clinic

Students enrolled in participating law school clinic certification programs practice intellectual property law before the USPTO under the strict guidance of a law school faculty clinic supervisor. Students practice both patent and trademark law before the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). The Office of Enrollment and Discipline administers the program; the Director of the Office of Enrollment and Discipline grants the law students limited recognition to practice before the USPTO.

Students gain experience drafting and filing either patent applications or trademark applications for clients of the law school clinic. Further, as they are authorized to practice before the USPTO, they gain experience answering office actions and communicating with either patent examiners or trademark examining attorneys for the applications they have filed.



Additional information

- Questions regarding the program may be directed to the Office of Enrollment and Discipline:
 - Phone: 571-272-4097
 - Email: LawSchoolInformation@uspto.gov
- See Frequently Asked Questions for more information:
 - [Law School Clinic Certification Program FAQs](#)

