

NPA internship programme targeting young law graduates

The National Prosecution Authority (NPA) hosted a virtual public webinar this week to raise awareness about an internship programme targeting young law graduates and people aspired to follow a career in prosecutions and contribute to serving justice for victims of crime.



Source: Getty Images

The Aspirant Prosecutor Programme within the National Prosecutions Service (NPS), assists law graduates in gaining practical prosecutorial experience.

The programme runs for 12-months, and after completion, enables competent candidates to be appointed at entry-level prosecutorial positions in the NPA.

The programme helps to ensure that qualified prosecutors provide additional prosecutorial capacity in the lower courts.

Speaking during an information sharing session on Wednesday, Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions Advocate Rodney de Kock said the NPA is open to doing things differently, and the whole strategic approach they are following is to

be innovative.

“I often argue that the way in which you introduce innovation into an institution, particularly an institution like the prosecution that has had its challenges over the last few years, is to ensure that we bring young people with new ideas into the institution,” De Kock said.

He also assured the graduates that when joining the prosecution, they are not going to make photocopies.

“In the prosecution we want to ensure that we value you, we value your contribution, and as young people, we want you to bring your ideas into the prosecution, and this aspirant programme is designed to do that. We will put you into a court and you will prosecute, and you will use the skills that you’ve have developed to be able to do your work,” De Kock said.

To be considered for the programmes, the graduates are expected to meet the requirements, including a South African LLB Degree (Bachelor of Laws) or equivalent foreign qualification, certified by SAQA, which must include Law of Evidence, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Civil Procedure, and Interpretation of Studies courses.

Alternatively, final year LLB students with the courses listed, provided they would have completed the degree before commencement of the programme requirement for one to be considered; and the applicant must be a South African.

Chief Prosecutor, Advocate Daphney Rangaka, said the training is conducted by designated NPA officials at the designated magistrates courts.

“All aspirant prosecutors will receive a monthly stipend for the duration of the programme. The applicable salary level will depend on the amount of relevant experience that the candidate has, but will be within the indicated range, for example, those who have completed articles will be assessed as having more experience and therefore, may be placed at a higher salary than those who have not,” Rangaka explained.

Recruitment process

An advertisement for the internship programme is placed in selected media, NPA website www.npa.gov.za or www.dpsa.gov.za, and on social media platforms, including [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/NPAProsecutes) and Twitter [@NPA_Prosecutes](https://twitter.com/NPA_Prosecutes).

Rangaka urged applicants not to submit the applications, unless the advert is placed.

Programme outcome

Successful applicants receive a minimum of six weeks classroom aspirant prosecutors’ tuition, and thereafter they receive practical in court training, where they conduct real cases in courts, demonstrating their competences and skills.

“Aspirant Prosecutors learn about court ethics and rules of court during trials and outside. During trials, aspirants learn about court proceedings from the court composition, opening statements/putting a charge, examination in chief (presenting the state’s case), cross-examination, address on merits, mitigation and aggravating processes.

“In administration, aspirant prosecutors are taught how to prepare a docket before trial and also what to do with the docket after trial. Further, aspirant prosecutors are taught how to compile monthly returns,” the Advocate explained.

She added that aspirant prosecutors are assessed on a continuous basis to determine their competencies, and before the expiry of the programme, final assessment is conducted on each aspirant prosecutor.

“Only those that are found to be competent may be appointed into entry level prosecutor posts in the NPA.”

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