

What is The Legal Revolution?

The Legal Revolution is a movement to transform the legal discipline through a series of initiatives that center racial equity, wellness, and the expertise of those most impacted by the law.

What does the Legal Revolution entail and/or what initiatives does the Revolution entail?

At present, our two primary initiatives are a **Prison to Law Pipeline** and **Law Firm** that, together, will democratize legal education and structurally reshape the legal discipline's contours to benefit and comprehensively include incarcerated and formerly incarcerated legal practitioners.

What is the Law Firm?

The Law Firm is a training ground for currently and formerly incarcerated scholars and legal practitioners, leveraging innovative ways for those with lived experience to engage in legal work with or without professional licensure; a prototype that can be rolled out to partnering law firms across the region. The Firm also provides civil legal services to All Square's formerly incarcerated Fellows and Scholars of our Pipeline Program. Finally, the Firm offers internships for currently incarcerated paralegal and juris doctorate scholars who are enrolled in the Pipeline (see more below).

What is the Prison to Law Pipeline?

The Prison to Law Pipeline is a program that facilitates ABA- approved paralegal and ABA- accredited juris doctorate degrees for incarcerated & formerly incarcerated scholars. The aim of the program is to democratize legal education and transform the legal landscape by putting the keys to the law in the hands of those most impacted by it .

How were Pipeline scholars selected?

Paralegal scholars submit essay applications and are selected by The Legal Revolution's team—using the following selection criteria that were developed in collaboration with our partners at the Minnesota Department of Corrections:

- Demonstrated leadership;
- Demonstrated command of and interest in the legal discipline;
- Academic prerequisites required by North Hennepin Community College; and
- 6 months without disciplinary issues within corrections facilities.

Juris Doctorate scholars submit essay applications and are selected by The Legal Revolution's team—using the following selection criteria that were developed in collaboration with our partners at the Minnesota Department of Corrections:

- Demonstrated leadership;
- Demonstrated command of and interest in the legal discipline;
- LSAT interest essays;
- LSAT score;
- Personal Statement Essay;

- Academic prerequisites required by Mitchell Hamline School of Law; and
- 6 months without disciplinary issues within corrections facilities.

Note: Final decisions on juris doctorate scholars' academic admission are made by partnering law school's admissions committee.

How does each scholars' sentence, or the length of their sentence, factor into their participation in the pipeline?

The Legal Revolution identifies qualified legal scholars to participate in the Pipeline regardless of their background or Scheduled Release Date (SRD). **In other words, we are not excluding anyone on the basis of their specific conviction or the amount of time they have remaining in prison.** Here's why:

- Pipeline Scholars' Background
 - All of our Pipeline scholars will have a criminal background, a status that has historically been used as a blanket lever for disinvestment. Given this context—and the belief that education and relationship with community are the cornerstones to healing, growth, and evolution—it is our position that all qualified scholars, regardless of their background, have a right to access a legal education.
- Pipeline Scholars' SRD
 - Our Pipeline scholars' date of release is not relevant as it relates to the scope and mission of our Legal Revolution. For those with SRD's that are shorter in time, all existing credits obtained through the Pipeline will be honored by the academic institutions we're partnering with and any remaining credits can be obtained upon release. For those with SRDs that are longer in duration, these students and eventual graduates bring immense legal value on the inside and can act as mentors to others who are traveling through this initiative.

Note: Though each scholar's specific conviction is not considered for acceptance on our end, all final decisions on juris doctorate scholars' academic admission are made by the partnering law school admissions committees.

How will scholars attend class from prison?

Juris doctorate and paralegal scholars will attend class remotely (synchronously) through platforms that have cleared all requisite DOC security measures. These platforms will include DOC-secure tablets, computer labs, and/ or video conference calls—utilizing learning management systems to engage with professors and classwork. In addition, certain courses for the paralegal scholars will be taught asynchronously, meaning scholars can access the lectures and materials at their own pace within a schedule determined by the professor.

Are scholars limited to studying, and ultimately engaging in, criminal law and/or civil rights law?

Absolutely not. Though some scholars may gravitate to criminal law and/or civil rights issues (given their lived experience), we are committed to supporting scholars irrespective of the area of law that they are interested in and expect that most scholars will be interested in other areas of jurisprudence. Mergers & acquisitions, corporate transactions, energy law, family law, sports & entertainment law, civil rights, law: we support it all and are forging post-employment and

internship opportunities in a wide variety of legal arenas that include, but are not limited to, criminal law and/or civil rights.

What kind of supports are available to scholars of the Pipeline?

We are partnering with Until We Are All Free and Creative Kuponya to ensure that our Pipeline scholars have peer support and internal investment from criminal justice experts who have experienced incarceration—as well as mental health support from wellness experts. The Legal Revolution Law Firm also supports scholars, as needed, by providing civil legal services. In addition, we are partnering with each academic institution to ensure that scholars have academic and professional mentorship and support as they travel through their respective degrees.

How will incarcerated paralegal and juris doctorate scholars secure the legal internships required to complete their legal education?

The Legal Revolution Law Firm is currently providing legal internships to incarcerated juris doctorate and paralegal scholars. To our knowledge, this is the first time law firm internships have been extended to those on the inside and we are looking forward, as time unfolds, to partnering with other private law firms to extend similar opportunities.

Are college degrees generally available to those in prison?

Yes, there are post-secondary degrees available for those in prison as a result of the significant “College Behind Bars” movement across the country. This includes the Bard Prison Initiative, a momentous College Prison Pilot transpiring in Minnesota, and a series of other trailblazing efforts that we are grateful to build upon.

Have ABA-approved paralegal degrees ever been available to those in prison?

To our knowledge: No. Prior to the ABA-approved paralegal program that we launched with North Hennepin Community College in August of 2021, only non-accredited paralegal programs had been available to those in correctional facilities. Though the education obtained through these non-approved programs is undoubtedly valuable for those wanting, or needing, to study jurisprudence while in prison, the degrees themselves are limited in scope and carry little weight in the legal discipline upon release.

Have ABA-accredited law degrees ever been available to those in prison?

To our knowledge: No. ABA-accredited law degrees have never been available to those in prison. The country’s first was facilitated by the Legal Revolution, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, and the Minnesota Department of Corrections in August of 2022.

How are tech-related security concerns being addressed?

The Department of Corrections IT team in partnership with the IT staff at each legal academic institution have implemented all requisite digital security measures to ensure compliance with all Department of Corrections security protocol.

Is my Pipeline tuition contribution tax-deductible?

Yes!

What if scholars involved in either the paralegal or the juris doctorate pipeline are released before they complete their degree?

If Pipeline scholars return home prior to the completion of their degree, all existing credits obtained through the Pipeline will be honored by the academic institutions we're partnering with and any remaining credits will be obtained upon release (i.e., classes can be resumed "on the outside").

What if juris doctorate scholars who obtain their law degrees are not able to sit for the bar exam?

Although we intend to work with other partners and leaders in Minnesota to push for reform in the legal licensure arena, the Legal Revolution's Law Firm is developing an employment prototype that directly addresses this issue by establishing positions that do not require a law license—while maintaining compliance with rules of professional conduct. Once developed and adopted, we will be sharing this model with other law firms and asking that they join us in the creation of these positions.

- For example, 51 M.S.A., General Rules of Practice, Rule 110.04 provides permitted acts that "self-help personnel," or non-attorneys, can legally be engaged in. The three buckets of actions established in this law break down a potential employment structure. Entry level employees will be the tip of the spear, trained to educate and direct the community to appropriate legal resources; tasks clarified in Rule 110.04(a).
- The next level of employees will be engaged in more direct assistance with forms, court scheduling, and other more technical needs that do not require a license. See Rule 110.04(b).
- Finally, Rule 110.04(c) lays out the prohibited tasks for non-licensed individuals.
- These tasks would be formal legal services provided by a licensed attorney.
- Simply put, while this is a relatively new ground, there are avenues through which individuals precluded from licensing may have the ability to engage and assist in legal services.

Assuming the Legal Revolution's Law Firm cannot employ all Pipeline graduates, where else will pipeline scholars be employed once they obtain their degrees and/or licensure?

We are actively seeking values-aligned law firm partners and general counsel offices to join us in our commitment to employing Pipeline graduates. In the long term, we are advocating for a legal discipline that recognizes and actively recruits for the invaluable contributions that legal practitioners with lived experience—such as Pipeline scholars—bring to the legal field.