

2024-2026 Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. Civil Rights Fellowship

ABOUT NSBHF & THE COCHRAN FELLOWSHIP

At Neufeld Scheck Brustin Hoffmann & Freudenberger, LLP (NSBHF), we represent individual plaintiffs in high-stakes civil-rights cases against police and other officials. Our mission is to win justice for our clients and hold officials accountable for misconduct through excellent legal work at every stage of every case. Our cases address timely criminal-justice issues like false confessions, junk forensic science, and prosecutorial misconduct. We prove that police fabricated or hid evidence to convict innocent individuals and lied about it. The common theme in all our work is holding corrupt officials accountable and getting justice for individual clients through big verdicts and settlements.

Our goal during the Cochran Fellowship is to develop the next generation of civil-rights litigators. We introduce dedicated lawyers early in their careers to all aspects of complex civil-rights litigation. We believe that the best way to learn is to take on real responsibility in a collaborative team environment while receiving active, intentional supervision, and the structure of the fellowship reflects that. To learn more, please visit: <https://nsbhf.com/cochran-fellowship/>. The Cochran Fellowship was named for late founding partner Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr., to honor his dedication and commitment to civil rights while a member of the firm and throughout his distinguished career.

Applications for the 2024-2026 Cochran Fellowship are accepted between Sunday, October 1, 2023 and Wednesday, November 1, 2023 to begin in Fall 2024. Please email fellows@nsbhf.com with a resume, cover letter (discussing your commitment to civil rights/social justice and your long-term goals), transcript, writing sample, and list of references. Only completed applications will be considered.

WHAT TO EXPECT AS A COCHRAN FELLOW

Our model is to take a small number of civil-rights cases and do them right, in every way, at every stage. For the Cochran Fellow, that means real experience and responsibility right off the bat. Fellows work on case teams supervised by one or more partners and a senior attorney, on cases at each stage of litigation: from pre-filing investigation to depositions, trial, mediation, and appeals. Given our national practice, fellows travel to work with the nation's top civil rights lawyers, litigating on the ground in places — like Baltimore, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Mississippi — with histories of racist policing and other egregious police misconduct. By the end of the two years, a typical fellow will have experienced the following:

- **PRETRIAL PREPARATION & TRIAL:** Our trials are high-profile and high-stakes, and fellows participate actively in all aspects of trial preparation. Many fellows have examined witnesses and argued motions at trial.
- **DEPOSITIONS:** Depositions are where we prove misconduct. Fellows take their own depositions under a partner's supervision, and second-chair depositions of lead defendants.
- **SUBSTANTIVE LEGAL WRITING:** Fellows are trained to be persuasive advocates, navigating complex legal doctrines and marshalling facts to help our clients win. Fellows work with partners to draft briefs in trial and appellate courts.
- **FACTUAL DEVELOPMENT:** Fellows take the lead on case development from the ground up, reviewing police files and testimony to find contradictions and overlooked leads, crafting detailed federal complaints, and working with investigators around the country to track down and interview witnesses.
- **CLIENT ADVOCACY:** Fellows develop close relationships with clients from day one, acting as advocates to tell their stories. Fellows also work closely with our staff social workers to support our clients.
- **EXPERT WORK:** Fellows work closely with nationally renowned experts in the forensic sciences, false confessions, and psychology, among other fields.
- **OTHER OPPORTUNITIES:** Fellows travel and gain courtroom experience in different jurisdictions, argue motions, negotiate with opposing counsel, and manage discovery in federal court.

2024-2026 Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. Civil Rights Fellowship

MENTORSHIP AT NSBHF & AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

NSBHF is committed to providing meaningful mentorship to all fellows, both within and outside the firm. Each Fellow is assigned dedicated time with founding partners Peter Neufeld and Barry Scheck to discuss career goals and gain introductions to thought leaders within the broader civil-rights community. Fellows also are assigned a partner mentor to serve as a resource for all aspects of their practice. The partnership is committed to providing tailored feedback, especially on major assignments like substantive writing and depositions. Former fellows have gone on to a variety of positions related to criminal justice, civil rights law, and litigation, including:

- State & Federal Public Defender
- Clinical Law Professor
- United States Supreme Court Clerk
- Tenured Law Professor
- Civil Rights Litigators within Federal and State Justice Departments
- Civil Rights Litigators at Nonprofits and Private Firms

WHO SHOULD APPLY

We are looking for fearless advocates for our clients, whether at a deposition, in brief writing, or in the courtroom. Although many fellows are former judicial clerks, there is no clerkship requirement. We seek candidates who have demonstrated excellence in any number of ways, whether through clinical work, other social justice experience, or litigation experience at another law firm.

NSBHF is committed to serving its diverse clients and ensuring an office environment that is welcoming and respectful to people of all backgrounds. We strongly encourage applicants from all cultures, races, educational backgrounds, life experiences, socio-economic classes, sexual orientations, ages, genders, and physical abilities to apply. We welcome applicants with personal or family experiences with the criminal legal system and/or incarceration. As an equal opportunity employer, NSB supports non-discrimination in the firm's employment practices. Successful candidates are committed to holding officers accountable for their misconduct.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The salary for the first year of the Cochran Fellowship is \$105,000 (gross) and \$115,000 (gross) in the second year. NSBHF offers a wide range of benefits including: comprehensive medical and dental coverage; student loan repayment assistance to enable talented lawyers to hold the fellowship regardless of financial means up to a maximum of \$2,000 per month (less applicable taxes); paid time off; a 401(k) Plan; and a charitable contribution match.