

Emerson Toomey
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EDUCATION

University of Illinois Chicago School of Law, Chicago, IL.

Juris Doctor Candidate, June 2028

Activities: Restorative Justice Society, Criminal Law Society, NLG Legal Observer

Achievements: Finalist, 2026 Legislative Drafting Contest

Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, IE.

Master of Philosophy in International History, April 2026

Dissertation: “Gan Teanga, Gan Tír”: Jailtacht and Republican Nationalism during the Irish Revolution, 1916-1924

Activities: Archival research (English/Gaeilge) in IE, NI, GB; Trinity Free Legal Aid Clinic researcher

Northeastern University, Boston, MA.

Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Minors in Law and Ethics (double minor), May 2022

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Federal Defender Service for the Northern District of Illinois

Law Clerk, September 2026 – Present

- Draft motions, briefs, petitions, research memorandums

The University of Illinois at Chicago School of Law

Legal Research Assistant, Professor Steven D. Schwinn, July 2026 – Present

- Develop and lead Constitutional Law lesson plans and toolkits for Chicago Public High School civics classes

The Mwalimu Center for Justice (formerly Capital Post-Conviction Project of Louisiana)

Law Clerk, April – August 2026

- Drafted motions, briefs, petitions, research memorandums; managed appellate record and discovery materials
- Met with clients incarcerated on death row

Breen & Pugh

Paralegal, March 2023 – April 2026

- Managed discovery materials for Partner Jonathan M. Brayman on cases including murder-for-hire, homicide, drug and weapons possession, sex crimes, misdemeanors, bioterrorism, RICO, white-collar, and a § 1983 police suit
- Composed mitigation submissions, sentencing reports; copy-edit reports, filings, and briefs
- Assisted with paralegal training and attorney support, as necessary

Legal Aid Chicago

Paralegal, Public Benefits Practice Group, January 2023 – June 2024

- Secured social security benefits for 31 homeless clients with mental and physical disabilities
- Used trauma-informed approach to interview and advocate for clients; reviewed medical records and wrote summary reports, filed disability applications and appeals

Phillips Black, Inc.

Intern, Capital Mitigation, November 2022 – May 2023

- Reviewed, transcribed, and analyzed medical, governmental, and educational records

The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia

Investigative Intern, Special Litigation, June 2021 – December 2021

- Analyzed records and developed psychosocial biographies for Second Look Amendment resentencing hearings
- Assisted trial division supervisory attorney on seven-count federal case

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CERTIFICATIONS

Non-Capital Mitigation (NOFSW), Appointed Representative (Social Security SSDI/SSI), SOAR (SAMHSA), Colbert-Williams (UIC)

PUBLICATIONS

Forthcoming: “The Prison as a Classroom: Republican *Gaeilge* Classes in the 1920s”, *History Ireland*, 2027.

“*Miller*: Mitigating Juvenile Life Without Parole”, UIC SBA Case of the Month Op-Ed, 1(1), Nov 2025.

“Supra-National and International Human Rights: Fundamental Notions.” *The Human Rights Ramifications of a United Ireland*. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin Free Legal Aid Clinic and Queens University Belfast, Feb 2025.