

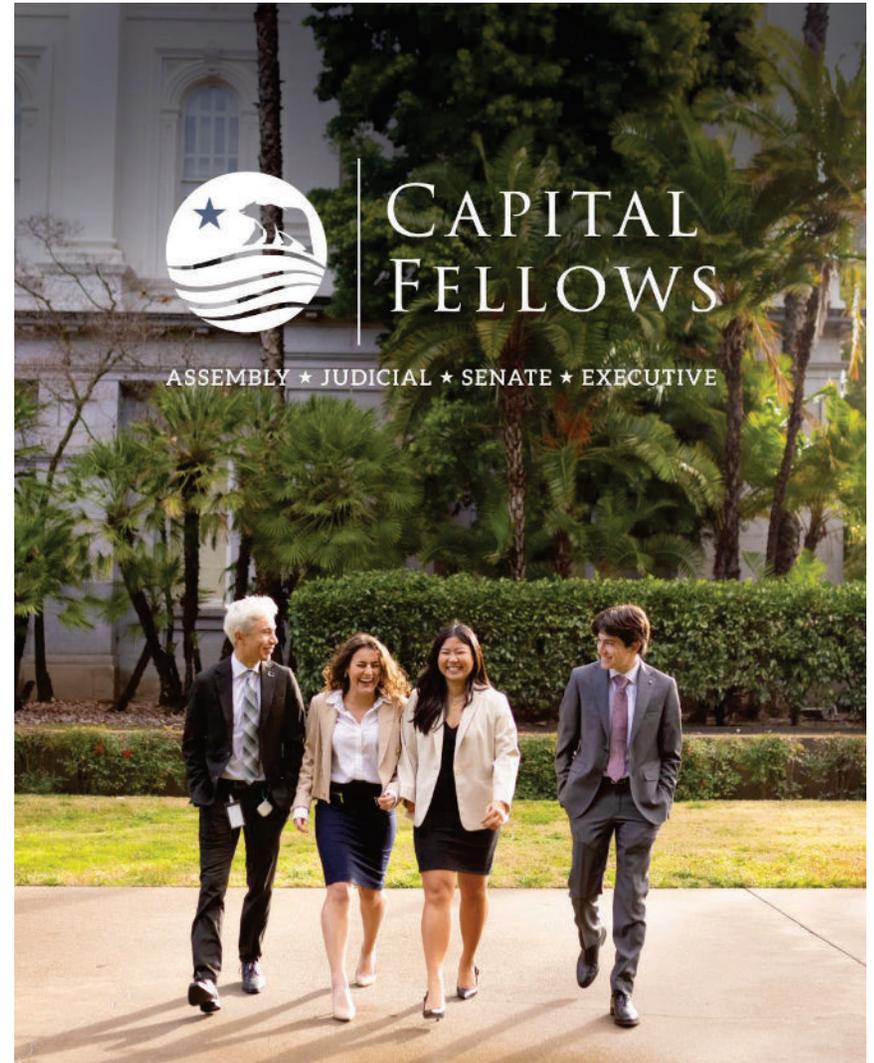
November 13, 2025

# The John Burton Fellowship:

Opening Doors for Foster Youth in  
California Government



**JOHN BURTON**  
**Advocates**  
*for Youth*



## Agenda

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- Introduction to John Burton Advocates for Youth
  - Background on the John Burton Fellowship
  - Overview of the Capital Fellows Program from the Center for California Studies
  - Q&A Session
  - Wrap-up: Application Support from JBAY and Next Steps for Applicants
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# John Burton Advocates for Youth

- Education
  - Housing
  - Economic Mobility
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## Why the John Burton Fellowship?

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- Few state leaders have personally experienced foster care.
- Lived experience is rarely represented in government decision-making.
- The John Burton Fellowship gives foster youth a seat at the table, in the Legislature and Executive Branch, to shape the policies that shape their lives.



# The John Burton Fellowship

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**Burton Fellows** will have access to supplementary financial support through John Burton Advocates for Youth:

- \$10,000 for housing, transportation, and other living expenses (in addition to an annual salary).
- Access to the **Burton Critical Needs and Opportunities Fund** for emergency support.
- If selected for a Burton Fellowship, a representative from JBAY will connect with the fellow and provide more information about accessing these funds and for general support throughout their enrollment in the program.



# Center for California Studies: Capital Fellows Overview

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[JBAY.ORG](http://JBAY.ORG)



# CAPITAL FELLOWS

ASSEMBLY ★ JUDICIAL ★ SENATE ★ EXECUTIVE

**A Gateway to  
Public Service and Leadership**





# CAPITAL FELLOWS

ASSEMBLY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

JUDICIAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

SENATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

# FELLOWSHIP SUMMARY



CAPITAL  
FELLOWS

**During the year-long programs, Capital Fellows operate as full-time paid employees working in a Legislative, Executive or Judicial Branch office for 10-11 months. Capital Fellows are placed at some of the highest levels of California state government and assist state legislators, senior-level executive staff, and court administrators with a broad range of public policy issues and projects and are typically given assignments with a significant amount of responsibility and challenges.**



# ACADEMIC SEMINAR



CAPITAL  
FELLOWS

**Attend regular academic seminars taught by Sacramento State faculty. Seminar discussions explore topics such as the state budget, civil service, executive leadership, and the relationship of government institutions to the society they serve. Fellows meet to share the lessons from their work, analyze and review current event or trends in California state government, and interact with guest speakers.**



# LOCATION



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FELLOWS

**All fellowship assignments are in the Sacramento area except the Judicial Fellowship, which offers placements statewide.**



# BENEFITS



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- **Monthly stipend of \$4888**
- **Health, vision, and dental benefits**
- **Student loan deferments**
- **One-time moving allowance of \$875**
- **6 Graduate units from Sacramento State in Political Science or Public Policy and Administration and a Graduate Certificate in Applied Policy and Government**



# ELIGIBILITY



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FELLOWS

- ✓ **Bachelor's degree in any major and either a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or higher in the last 60 (semester) or 90 (quarter) units by September 1 of the fellowship year (2026)**
- ✓ **20 years or older by September 1 of the fellowship year (2026)**
- ✓ **Non-U.S. citizens must provide proof of appropriate immigration status**

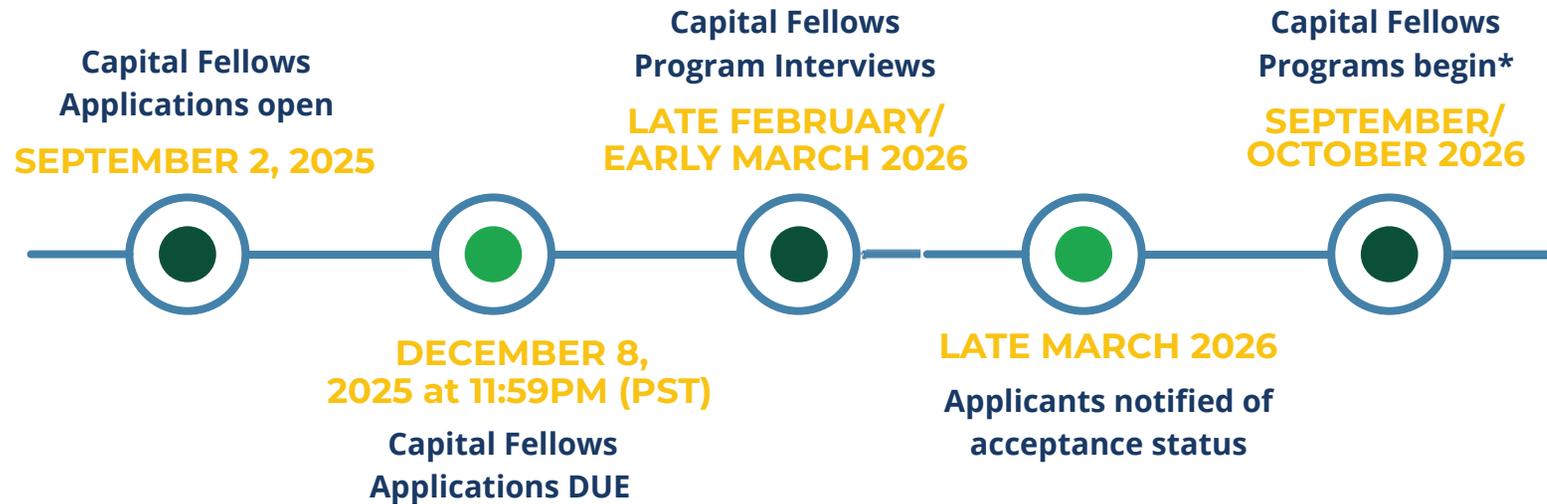
*The Capital Fellows Programs do not meet the requirements for F-1 or J-1 visas.*



**Individuals can apply to one or more of the programs that meet their interests.**

**Fellows come from all economic, cultural, career, and educational backgrounds; no previous legislative or political experience is required. Applicants with any party affiliation are welcome to apply, including Republicans, Democrats, and people affiliated with third parties or no party at all.**

# APPLICATION TIMELINE



*\*The Executive Fellowship and Judicial Fellowship start in September and the Assembly Fellowship and Senate Fellowship start in October.*

# APPLICATION



CAPITAL  
FELLOWS

- ✓ **Completed online application form**
- ✓ **Personal statement**
- ✓ **Policy statement**
- ✓ **Resume**
- ✓ **College transcript(s)**
- ✓ **List of three individuals who will write letters of recommendation**

**Applications due December 8, 2025  
11:59PM (PST)**

APPLY  
HERE



# *The* JUDICIAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



Instagram  
@cajudicial



# THE JUDICIAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Judicial Fellowship Program offers the opportunity to broaden your understanding of the judicial system through exposure to state court administration. Judicial Fellows work in Superior Courts and Judicial Council offices across California, **gaining practical experience in the management of a complex and changing court environment.**

**10 Judicial Fellows are selected each fellowship year**

Judicial Fellows work on assignments such as legislative analysis and leading research projects related to court programs and public policy initiatives. Key components of the program are the cohort model of the fellowship class and the strength of the mentorship opportunities that exist for fellows in each of the placements

**The only Capital Fellows program that offers placements statewide, allowing Fellows the opportunity to serve in communities throughout California.**

**Participate in monthly academic and field seminars and the monthly Speaker Series.**

**Complete a year long Fellowship Project that addresses a real-world problem in your placement court or office.**

# *The* SENATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



Instagram  
@senate.fellows



## THE SENATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Established in 1973, the Senate Fellowship Program has become the principal source of career staff for the state Senate. At all levels of the fellowship process, Fellows draft legislation, analyze bills, and draft speeches and talking points for Senators, all while serving as full-time professional legislative staff. The program welcomes people with diverse life experiences and backgrounds who have a track record of civic engagement and a commitment to serving the State of California.

### **18 Senate Fellows are selected each fellowship year**

Senate Fellows are assigned to the offices of a Senator or policy committee and work as part of the public policy staff team in the Capitol. Responsibilities include helping develop legislative proposals, researching and analyzing bills, responding to constituent inquiries, and writing press release and speeches.

### **Academic Seminar**

Senate Fellows attend weekly seminars at the Capitol during the fall and spring semesters, earning six graduate units from the Political Science Department at Sacramento State. Upon successful completion of the fellowship, Fellows earn a graduate certificate in Applied Government and Policy. The seminars provide an academic perspective on the experience gained in Fellows' office placements.

# *THE JESSE M. UNRUH* ASSEMBLY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



Instagram  
@assemblyfellows



# THE JESSE M. UNRUH ASSEMBLY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Created in 1957, the Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellowship Program is one of the oldest and most prestigious fellowship programs in the nation. The program provides aspiring public servants of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to directly participate in the legislative process as full-time professional staff in the Assembly. Fellows gain valuable insight into California politics and public policy while working closely with policymakers and elected officials.

## 22 Assembly Fellows are selected each year

Assembly Fellows have the diversity of the Assembly's 80 Member offices to be matched with. Fellows serve as Legislative Aides in a Member's office or Committee Consultant for a policy or fiscal committee. They typically work under the mentorship and guidance of the Chief of Staff or Legislative Director.

**Build New Skills & Learn the Legislative Process**  
**Participate in Weekly Academic Seminar**  
**Attend Weekly Brown Bag Discussions**  
**Professional Networking and Hands-On Learning**

# *The* EXECUTIVE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



Instagram  
@execfellows



## THE EXECUTIVE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Created in 1986, the program provides an opportunity to work as full-time professional staff in high levels of government throughout the executive branch. Placements include offices of the Governor, constitutional offices and Cabinet-level staff, as well as agencies, departments, boards, and commissions. The broad range of issues that the executive branch deals with provides Fellows with valuable insight and experience in public policy and politics. The size and scope of the executive branch offers Fellows the flexibility to work on a variety of issues and develop new skills and passions.

### 18 Executive Fellows are selected yearly

Executive Fellows function as full-time professional staff in executive offices at various levels of California's executive branch, which includes the Office of the Governor, constitutional offices, Cabinet secretaries, commissions, and departments. This program uniquely integrates work experiences with academic and professional development. Gain experience in policy development, legislation, communication, and program implementation.

**Learn a core set of professional skills. Get comprehensive training about California state government, including briefings by the governor's staff, constitutional officers, legislative staff, academicians, and others.**



# CAPITAL FELLOWS

ASSEMBLY ★ JUDICIAL ★ SENATE ★ EXECUTIVE

APPLY  
HERE



WEBSITE



Instagram @calstudiescsus



# Application Support

- JBAY will be providing support to foster youth who are applying for the Capital Fellows programs.
- All support provided via Zoom between the hours of 7am and 9pm PST (pending availability).
- **Pre-December 8th support includes:**
  - Application portal navigation and support
  - Resume review and support
  - "Capital Fellows Common Statement of Purpose" review and support
  - "Program" or "Program Policy Statement" review and support
- **Post-December 8th support includes:**
  - Mock interviews
  - Possible networking with relevant stakeholders



## Next Steps

- After this webinar, JBAY will email webinar slides and additional contact information for application support.
- Remember to indicate your foster youth status, whether in the application or in a future interview.
- Pre-application support begins immediately and will conclude December 8.
- Post-application support will start the week of December 15.





# QUESTIONS

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[JBAY.ORG](http://JBAY.ORG)

**Contact JBAY for Support!**

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**Email [zach@jbay.org](mailto:zach@jbay.org)**

JBAY.ORG



CAPITAL  
FELLOWS

ASSEMBLY ★ JUDICIAL ★ SENATE ★ EXECUTIVE



**The Capital Fellows programs** are nationally recognized public policy fellowships which offer unique experiences in policy-making and development in each branch of California's state government.

During the year-long programs, Capital Fellows operate as full-time paid employees working in a Legislative, Executive or Judicial Branch office for 10-11 months. Capital Fellows are placed at some of the highest levels of California state government and assist state legislators, senior-level executive staff, and court administrators with a broad range of public policy issues and projects and are typically given assignments with a significant amount of responsibility and challenges.

**All Fellows receive:**

- 10-11 months paid (\$4888 per month), full-time employment, as well as medical, dental and vision benefits;
- One-time moving allowance of \$875 (non-taxable);
- Paid university enrollment and earn six graduate units;
- Student loan deferment; and
- Upon successful completion of the fellowship, a Graduate Certificate in Applied Policy and Government

**Applicants must submit the following by the application deadline:**

- Completed online application
- Personal statement and policy statement
- Resume
- College transcript(s)
- A list of three individuals who will write letters of recommendation

**Questions?** Contact Shannon Swanson at [shannonswanson2@csus.edu](mailto:shannonswanson2@csus.edu).

**Website:**



**Apply:**



**Sign up for updates:**

