

Jessica Smith-Peterson, Esq.

Jessica Smith-Peterson is a Deputy Public Defender at the Clark County Public Defender's Office in Las Vegas, Nevada. In her work as a public defender, Jessica zealously advocates on behalf of indigent defendants accused of misdemeanor and felony charges. She has served on several boards as a former national student board member for the American Constitution Society (ACS), former national secretary for the National Urban League Young Professionals (NULYP) and alumna and former alumni council member for Young People For (YP4), a national social justice incubator for college aged people through People for the American Way.

Prior to being at the Public Defender's office, Jessica was a Corps Member in City Year, DC, and a law clerk for the ACLU of Nevada. While at the ACLU, Jessica taught formerly convicted persons how to restore their voting rights in Nevada and worked closely on an impact litigation lawsuit on behalf of indigent clients receiving poor legal representation in rural Nevada. Jessica has moderated and participated on panels and podcasts concerning criminal justice reform and Knowing Your Rights.

She has written op-eds piece focusing on Supreme Court confirmation hearings in the Nevada Independent as well as the Nevada Lawyer calling for the reallocation of funds from Police Departments. During the height of the George Floyd protests in the Summer of 2020, Jessica organized over 70 lawyers in the state of Nevada to represent protestors arrested on misdemeanor charges, pro-bono, that successfully resulted in dismissals. She has served as a legal observer with the National Lawyers Guild Las Vegas chapter and also serves as an inaugural steering committee member leading virtual teach-ins on policing in Nevada. Jessica is a graduate of Howard University School of Law and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). She lives in Las Vegas, NV with her husband, daughter, and rescued cat Bodega and dog, Harley.