

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP HANDBOOK 2019-2020



**The University of Akron School of Law
Career Services Office
C. Blake McDowell Law Center
150 University Avenue
Akron, OH 44325
Phone: 330-972-5321
<https://www.uakron.edu/law/career-services/>
Alisa Benedict O'Brien, Assistant Dean
Alecia Bencze, Assistant Director**

Judicial Clerkships

A judicial clerkship is one of the strongest foundations upon which any law career can be built. Judicial clerkships are post-graduate positions, usually lasting one or two years, in which you work as the right-hand analytical and research person for a judge. The positions usually start in August or September of each year. Deadlines for applications to federal judges are rolling and determined by individual judges. Student applicants should apply beginning in February of 2L year (2D, 3E). Some federal judges will accept applications from students during the fall or spring of their 3L year. **For Class of 2020 grads, applications will be released beginning June 17, 2019. For Class of 2021 grads, applications will be released beginning June 15, 2020.** Applications for judicial clerkships with state court judges are due for some states during the 2nd year of law school, and for most states, during the fall of the 3rd year of law school. More positions are available with state court judges in your final semester as well.

Judicial law clerk (“judicial clerk”) experience is universally recognized by the legal community to be extremely useful in law practice, so it is one of the most valuable experiences you could ever want on your resume. The training judicial clerks receive in legal analysis, writing and research often leads directly to rewarding careers in public and private practice, and in academia. Judicial clerkships are available at federal, state and local levels in both trial and appellate courts as well as in bankruptcy, tax, immigration and other courts. Other types of judicial clerkships that should be considered are those with Federal Administrative Law Judges (“ALJs”).

Competition for judicial clerkships is fierce from law students around the country. The higher the level of court, the tougher the competition. Geographic location also plays a part in the degree of competition; the more “desirable” the location (i.e. San Diego, California, New York City, Orlando Florida, etc.) the greater the competition. Very strong grades and law review experience are important qualifications for judicial clerkships, though some candidates have secured judicial law clerk positions by demonstrating their work quality to a judge through prior service as a student judicial extern to that judge either as a volunteer or for academic externship credit.

Duties of a Judicial Clerk

The most important function of a judicial clerk is to assist the judge with the research and writing associated with a heavy caseload. The exact duties vary from judge to judge, but duties normally include the following:

- Review competing pleadings
- Research issues presented by the pleadings
- Write legal memoranda respecting the pleadings and recommend disposition
- Draft opinions and orders for discussion with the judge
- Proof and edit opinions and orders written by the judge
- Discuss/argue potential dispositions with the judge
- Shepardize and check citations for accuracy
- Attend/observe many court proceedings

There may be other functions that a particular judge will assign to a judicial clerk. Judicial clerks in a *trial* court may also be assigned the following duties:

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

- Communicate with attorneys to determine case status
- Conduct settlement conferences with attorneys
- Assist the court during trials
- Write jury instructions

The work of a judicial clerk in an *appellate* court is sometimes considered to be more academic-like than the work of a judicial clerk in a *trial* court. In appellate courts, caseloads often focus on briefed appeals, and more of a judicial clerk's time is spent researching and writing on each case. By contrast, in trial courts, caseloads are full with pretrial motions and conferences in addition to trials, sometimes leaving less unfettered time for research and writing than in the appellate courts.

Benefits of a Judicial Clerkship

Attorneys who have completed judicial clerkships agree that the experience was invaluable to their careers. A judicial clerk often learns more about how courts actually decide cases than an attorney might ever hope to learn after years of private, public interest or government practice. Judicial clerks fine-tune their writing skills and learn exactly what makes a good (and bad) brief or motion argument. They learn what type of work product persuades the courts and how best to present those arguments. For judicial clerks who are not certain of the type of law they eventually want to practice, the experience gained while clerking often helps to define areas of interest. Law clerks are also exposed to the methods and customs of practitioners, and learn the level of professional behavior expected of lawyers.

Upon completion of a judicial clerkship, clerks often find they are very marketable. The contacts and experience gained while clerking broaden clerk's future opportunities with all types of employers.

I. Courts Where Judicial Clerkships are Available

Traditional U.S. Federal Courts. The Federal Courts (sometimes referred to as "Article III Courts") are the independent Judicial Branch of the United States federal government. The Federal Court system was created by, and its jurisdiction is governed by, Article III of the United States Constitution.

- *U.S. Supreme Court.* Judicial clerks to U.S. Supreme Court Justices have first clerked for another federal judge (usually appellate) before applying.
- *U.S. Courts of Appeals.* The Courts of Appeals consist of thirteen circuits: the eleven numbered circuits and the Federal and D.C. circuits. Judges sit in various locations within each circuit and generally hire one or more clerks.
- *U.S. District Courts.* District Courts are the trial division of the federal courts and are presided over by District Court Judges and Magistrate Judges, both of whom hire judicial clerks. There may be several Districts within a given state. The U.S. District Courts employ Federal Magistrate Judges. Because of overcrowding in the court system, these judges hear many, and in most cases, all of the same matters heard by federal judges. A clerkship with a Magistrate Judge is a phenomenal experience and should be viewed equally to a clerkship with a District Court Judge.

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

- *U.S. Bankruptcy Courts.* All bankruptcies are controlled by the Federal Bankruptcy Code and are filed under the jurisdiction of the Federal courts. Each U.S. Federal District has a bankruptcy court that acts as a unit of that court.

U.S. Court of Special Jurisdiction. The Congress of the United States has also established a number of Special Courts which also employ judicial clerks. The jurisdiction of these courts is allocated by subject matter. These courts are also part of the Federal Judiciary.

- *U.S. Court of Federal Claims.* Handles claims for money due from the U.S., including certain tax cases.
- *U.S. Court of International Trade.* Hears cases involving the value, classification and tariffs on imports.
- *U.S. Tax Court.* Jurisdiction over controversies involving income, estate and gift taxes.
- *U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.* Reviews all court martial proceedings.
- *U.S. Court of Appeals for Veteran's Claims.* Reviews decisions of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- *Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation.* Reviews and determines whether civil different federal districts should be consolidated and transferred to one federal district.

Administrative Law Judges. Certain federal executive branch agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency and Drug Enforcement Administration, employ Administrative Law Judges ("ALJs"). ALJs enforce agencies' regulations and hear cases that pertain to the agency. Many, if not most, ALJs employ judicial clerks.

Look for the names and contact information of ALJs here: <https://www.oalj.dol.gov/>

How to Obtain a Federal Judicial Clerkship

The primary method to apply for federal clerkships is through the OSCAR system. Most federal judges utilize OSCAR annually to obtain and review applications for judicial clerkships. NOTE: for judges who use OSCAR, it is the only method. Students interested in a federal judicial clerkship should read the weekly Career Connection and review the online job postings on AkronLawJobs as federal agencies occasionally release clerkship positions to law schools for posting. Further, interested students should regularly check the OSCAR website and www.usajobs.gov as federal agencies occasionally announce openings for clerkship positions on those websites.

Finally, and most importantly, if you are serious about obtaining a federal judicial clerkship, it is imperative that you contact the CSO immediately after your 1L year and stay in contact with the office throughout your law school career. There are many procedural obstacles and groundwork that needs to be accomplished prior to obtaining a clerkship and you will want the CSO to provide you with information and guidance.

State Courts

Like federal courts, state courts also have both trial and appellate courts. Some states have special courts to address issues relevant to that state. However, unlike the federal courts, not all state courts employ judicial clerks per se. Because states vary so widely in their procedures for state court clerkships, check [The Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkships](#) online, state court websites or with the Career Services Office for state by state information. In addition, below is some information for Ohio, as well as a Guide to all states at the end of this Handbook.

About the Ohio Judicial System

The Constitution of Ohio separates our state government into three branches, each with distinct areas of responsibility — the executive, the legislative and the judicial.

The primary function of the judicial branch is to fairly and impartially settle disputes according to the law. To do this, a number of courts have been established in the state by the Constitution and by acts of the General Assembly.

Further, in addition to its place in the court structure as the court of last resort, the Supreme Court, in particular the Chief Justice, is responsible for the administration of the judicial branch in Ohio.

- **The Supreme Court of Ohio**

The Supreme Court of Ohio is established by Article IV, Section 1, of the Ohio Constitution, which provides that “the judicial power of the state is vested in a Supreme Court, Courts of Appeals, Courts of Common Pleas and divisions thereof, and such other courts inferior to the Supreme Court as may from time to time be established by law.”

Article IV, Section 2, of the Constitution sets the size of the Court at seven – a Chief Justice and six Justices – and outlines the jurisdiction of the Court.

The Supreme Court is the court of last resort in Ohio. Most of its cases are appeals from the 12 district courts of appeals. The Court may grant leave to appeal criminal cases from the courts of appeals and may direct any court of appeals to certify its record on civil cases that are found to be “cases of public or great general interest.”

The Court must accept appeals of cases that originated in the courts of appeals; cases involving the death penalty; cases involving questions arising under the U.S. Constitution or the Ohio Constitution; and cases in which there have been conflicting opinions from two or more courts of appeals.

The Court must also accept appeals from such administrative bodies as the Board of Tax Appeals and the Public Utilities Commission. The Court has original jurisdiction for certain special remedies that permit a person to file an action in the Supreme Court. These extraordinary remedies include writs of habeas corpus (involving the release of persons allegedly unlawfully imprisoned or committed), writs of mandamus and procedendo (ordering a public official to do a required act), writs of prohibition (ordering a lower court to cease an unlawful act), and writs of

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

quo warranto (against a person or corporation for usurpation, misuse or abuse of public office or corporate office or franchise).

The Court may also grant leave to appeal a case involving a contested election. This type of a case is unique because it is the only type of discretionary appeal that permits a case to be taken directly from the court of common pleas to the Supreme Court, bypassing the court of appeals.

The Supreme Court makes rules governing practice and procedure in Ohio's courts, such as the Rules of Evidence, Rules of Civil Procedure and Rules of Criminal Procedure. Procedural rules adopted by the Supreme Court become effective unless both houses of the General Assembly adopt a concurrent resolution of disapproval. The Supreme Court also exercises general superintendence over all state courts through its rule-making authority. The rules of superintendence set minimum standards for court administration statewide. Unlike procedural rules, rules of superintendence do not have to be submitted to the General Assembly to become effective.

The Court also has authority over the admission of attorneys to the practice of law in Ohio and may discipline admitted attorneys who violate the rules governing the practice of law.

The Chief Justice and six Justices are elected to six-year terms on a nonpartisan ballot. Two Justices are chosen at the general election in even-numbered years. In the year when the Chief Justice is on the ballot, voters elect three members of the Court. A person must be an attorney with at least six years of experience in the practice of law to be elected or appointed to the Court. Appointments are made by the governor for vacancies that occur between elections.

- **Courts of Appeals**

The Courts of Appeals are established by Article IV, Section 1, of the Ohio Constitution and their jurisdiction is outlined in Article IV, Section 3. As the intermediate level appellate courts, their primary function is to hear appeals from the common pleas, municipal and county courts. Each case is heard and decided by a three-judge panel.

The state is divided into 12 appellate districts, each of which is served by a court of appeals. The number of judges in each district depends on a variety of factors, including the district's population and the court's caseload. Each district has a minimum of four appellate judges. Appeals court judges are elected to six-year terms in even-numbered years. They must have been admitted to the practice of law in Ohio six years preceding commencement of the term.

In addition to their appellate jurisdiction, the courts of appeals have original jurisdiction, as does the Supreme Court, to hear applications for writs of habeas corpus, mandamus, procedendo, prohibition and quo warranto. The 10th District Court of Appeals in Franklin County also hears appeals from the Ohio Court of Claims.

- **The Court Of Claims**

The Court of Claims has original jurisdiction to hear and determine all civil actions filed against the state of Ohio and its agencies. The court also hears appeals from decisions made by the attorney general on claims allowed under the Victims of Crime Act.

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

The Court of Claims decides civil claims typically involving contract disputes, property damage, personal injury, immunity of state officers and employees, discrimination and wrongful imprisonment. The Chief Justice assigns judges to hear such cases. In almost every instance, a single judge will hear a case, but the Chief Justice may assign a panel of three judges to a civil action that presents novel or complex issues of law and fact.

Civil complaints filed for \$2,500 or less are decided on the contents of the case file or “administratively” by the clerk or a deputy clerk of the court. Appeals from those decisions (“administrative determinations”) may be taken to a judge of the court upon motion for court review. The court’s judgment is not subject to further appeal.

Appeals filed by crime victims are heard and determined by a panel of three commissioners who are appointed by the Supreme Court for a term of six years. A further and final appeal from the panel’s decision may be taken to a judge of the court. Like administrative determinations, the judge’s decision is final.

- **Courts of Common Pleas**

The Court of Common Pleas, the only trial court created by the Ohio Constitution, is established by Article IV, Section 1, of the Constitution, and its duties are outlined in Article IV, Section 4. There is a court of common pleas in each of the 88 counties. Specific courts of common pleas may be divided into separate divisions by the General Assembly, including general, domestic relations, juvenile and probate divisions. Common pleas judges are elected to six-year terms on a nonpartisan ballot. A person must be an attorney with at least six years of experience in the practice of law to be elected or appointed to the court.

- **General Division**

The general division has original jurisdiction in all criminal felony cases and in all civil cases in which the amount in controversy is more than \$15,000. General divisions also have appellate jurisdiction over the decisions of some state administrative agencies.

- **Domestic Relations Division**

Domestic relations courts have jurisdiction over all proceedings involving divorce or dissolution of marriages, annulment, legal separation, spousal support and allocation of parental rights and responsibilities for the care of children.

- **Juvenile Division**

Juvenile courts hear cases involving persons under 18 years of age who are charged with acts that would be crimes if committed by an adult. They also hear cases involving unruly, dependent and neglected children. Juvenile courts have jurisdiction in adult cases involving paternity, child abuse, nonsupport, contributing to the delinquency of minors and the failure to send children to school.

- **Probate Division**

The Ohio Constitution of 1851 provided that probate courts were to be established as separate independent courts with jurisdiction over the probate of wills and supervision of the administration of estates and guardianships. In 1968, under the Modern Courts Amendment of the Ohio Constitution, the probate courts became divisions of the courts of common pleas. Probate courts also have jurisdiction over the issuance of marriage licenses, adoption proceedings, determination of sanity or mental competency and certain eminent domain proceedings. Probate judges can perform marriages and may charge a fee for the service.

- **Municipal and County Courts**

Municipal and county courts are created by the General Assembly as provided in R.C. 1901 and 1907. When municipal courts exercise countywide jurisdiction, no county court is needed. A county court is needed if an area of a county is not served by a municipal court.

The subject-matter jurisdiction of municipal and county courts is nearly identical. Both municipal and county courts have the authority to conduct preliminary hearings in felony cases, and both have jurisdiction over traffic and non-traffic misdemeanors. These courts also have limited civil jurisdiction. Municipal and county courts may hear civil cases in which the amount of money in dispute does not exceed \$15,000.

Judges sitting in these courts, like probate judges, have the authority to perform marriages. Municipal court judges are elected to six-year terms on a nonpartisan judicial ballot. A municipal court judge may have jurisdiction in one or more municipalities, across county borders, in adjacent townships, or throughout an entire county. A county court judge is elected to a six-year term on a nonpartisan ballot. All county court judges and 20 municipal court judges are part-time.

Municipal court judges and county court judges must be attorneys with at least six years of experience in the practice of law.

- **Mayor's Courts**

Mayor's courts are not a part of the judicial branch of Ohio government and are not courts of record. Still, they must file statistics quarterly and annually with the Supreme Court. Additionally, at the request of the General Assembly, the Supreme Court has adopted rules providing for court procedures and basic legal education for mayors. Mayors whose courts hear alcohol- and drug-related traffic offenses have additional educational requirements.

Ohio and Louisiana are the only two states that allow the mayors of municipal corporations to preside over a court. In Ohio, in municipalities populated by more than 100 people where there is no municipal court, mayor's courts hear only cases involving violations of local ordinances and state traffic laws.

A mayor is not required to be a lawyer, but may appoint an attorney who has engaged in the practice of law for three years to hear cases in mayor's court.

A person convicted in a mayor's court may appeal the conviction to the municipal or county court having jurisdiction within the municipal corporation.

II. When to Apply

A. Federal Judicial Clerkships.

Federal judicial clerkships generally begin in August or September of each year. Second and Third year students and graduates may apply for federal judicial clerkships and law students should start the process in February of 2L year.

There are two methods by which to apply to Federal Judges: Online and Regular Mail or email. Some judges only accept applications online through a database called "OSCAR" (Online System for Clerkship Application and Review); see <https://oscar.uscourts.gov/home> and more information below, while other judges accept applications only through regular mail.

1. For Judges Accepting Online OSCAR Applications

You will have access to OSCAR to begin your applications during your 2L year. You should frequently check OSCAR to note open positions and deadlines, as they vary by Judge. However, it is highly recommended that you complete your online applications early and prior to all deadlines. **Please note that the specific OSCAR deadlines change every year and are published far in advance by the Career Services Office. Full OSCAR instructions are available in the Career Services Office and below and here:** <https://oscar.uscourts.gov/applicant-prep-kit>.

Applications submitted later than the specified deadlines will not be considered timely and will likely not receive the same consideration, if any, as timely applications. Many judges receive hundreds of applications on the deadline date and make their interview decisions immediately thereafter. Therefore, you should research and prepare your federal judicial clerkship applications beginning early in the summer before the applications are due, more than one year prior to the start of the judicial clerkship.

Very occasionally federal clerkships become available in the spring of your 3L year. For instance, when a new judge is confirmed, or when an existing clerk leaves his or her judicial clerkship post early, positions may open up throughout the year. Most often these position openings are posted on an individual court's website or are announced through OSCAR.

2. For Judges Accepting Regular Mail or Email Applications.

Applicants must mail/send their judicial clerkship applications so that they arrive in chambers of hiring judges ON the deadline date; not before, and not after. Because judges have established these guidelines to gather applications from interested candidates quickly and efficiently, applications received in chambers before this date may be disregarded; and applications received in chambers more than a day or two after this date may be deemed "late". So strive to have your materials arrive in chambers on the designated deadline date.

B. State Judicial Clerkships.

State judicial clerkships timelines vary from state to state, but like federal clerkships, state clerkships also generally begin in August or September of each year. **Many state courts require applications from second year students more than a year and a half prior to the start of the clerkship.** Other state courts take judicial clerkship applications early in the third year. Still other state courts, such as some California Superior Courts, hire judicial law clerks (sometimes called Legal Research Assistants) late in the third year, only several months in advance of the start of the clerkship.

Therefore, for state clerkships, you should research the states in which you are interested early (ideally near the beginning of your second year), so you understand the particular hiring process for those states and avoid missing important application deadlines.

See resources below for information about which state courts accept applications and the applicable due dates.

Consult with the Career Services Office staff to ensure you conduct a complete search for federal and state judicial clerkships of interest to you.

III. To Which Judges Should You Apply?

Be Geographically Strategic! Realistically assess the competitiveness of your own candidacy, and decide about the geographic scope of your applications accordingly. If you really want the experience and value of a judicial clerkship you should apply widely, zeroing in on areas where you have ties (where you went to school, were raised or have relatives) and adding “less desirable” regions where you believe you will have a competitive advantage because many law students will not want to apply. These are areas where you will likely have more success than if you limit your quest for these prestigious positions only to highly desirable locations.

REMEMBER: A clerkship in any federal court in the country is valuable no matter where you intend to live and practice. Federal law is federal law no matter where you live! Similarly, a state court clerkship anywhere in your region of preference is of tremendous value to your career. Students have been most successful when they have not limited their search to intensely competitive areas such as California, New York, and other large metropolitan areas or to just Ohio. After one year of judicial clerkships, clerks successfully lateral back to excellent positions in those areas.

After you decide on the geographic scope of your applications, the next step is to decide to which specific courts and/or individual judges you will apply and to compile the list of judges to whom you will apply. The sections below list helpful resources to assist you in identifying federal and state judges in chosen geographic areas. Consider also applying to judges with connections to your undergraduate institution, those with scholarly or practice interests similar to your own, those in your home state, those with apparent political leanings aligned with yours or those whose backgrounds are of particular interest to you. Finally, for federal trial court clerkships, remember to apply to positions with prestigious Magistrate Judges and Senior Judges as well as with District Judges; there is sometimes less competition for these positions, though they are equally as valuable as other federal clerkships.

Finally, if you are interested in business, economics, mathematics, or are not sure what practice area you would like to pursue, apply for a judicial clerkship with a Bankruptcy Court. These are impressive positions with tremendous future career power.

IV. How to Apply

A. Federal Judicial Clerkships (including Bankruptcy Courts)

Important Note: Remember that there are two (2) types of federal judges for application purposes: “Online OSCAR Applications” and “Regular or Email Applications.”

1. Online “OSCAR” Applications

OSCAR is the web-based system funded by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts that enables clerkship applicants to file complete applications, and recommenders to file letters of recommendation, online. Applicants are able to sort and screen clerkships and designate the OSCAR-participant judges to whom they wish to apply. Judges can sort and screen the applications directed to them. Law school administrators are able to view student applicant information, and coordinate the submission of faculty recommendation letters. OSCAR presents a list of all federal judges. Once you are logged in to OSCAR, OSCAR indicates one of the following for each judge (**Note** that these important categories will not be revealed unless you are logged into the system):

- a. “Apply on OSCAR”: accepting online applications only through OSCAR; or
- b. “Traditional Applications”: accepting regular mail/paper applications or e-mail applications; or
- c. “Not Hiring”; or
- d. “No Clerkship Information Available” Note that this category of judges is only available after you have logged in and search for judges. Before logging in these judges are categorized as “Not Hiring”. Be careful. As noted below, this category may present tremendous opportunity with reduced competition.

In the first two instances above, OSCAR presents “job listings” detailing information about application requirements. Last year approximately 800 judges posted listings ONLINE through OSCAR.

For judges listed on OSCAR as accepting online applications, OSCAR enables clerkship applicants to select the federal judges to whom they will apply, and then to build and submit their applications online. For these judges, applicants upload cover letters, resumes, grade sheets/transcripts; writing samples and submit electronic recommendation letters. See below. For online applications from current students, judges will log on to OSCAR on a specific given date each year to view all complete applications, and to begin their hiring process. The specific OSCAR deadline dates are published on a rolling basis – check OSCAR frequently and check in with the Career Services Office.

Helpful hint: you can set up email notifications on OSCAR to be notified about new positions!

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

For Judges listed on OSCAR as accepting regular or email applications (but not through the OSCAR online system), you will follow the application instructions on the OSCAR “listing” (regarding materials requested, hiring criteria, etc.) but you will send your applications as detailed below under “Regular Mail or Email Applications”.

For judges listed on OSCAR as “not hiring” you will not submit an application. These judges have affirmatively informed OSCAR that they do not have open positions.

For judges listed on OSCAR as “no clerkship information available” all you know is that they have not provided any affirmative information to OSCAR about their clerkship hiring situation. Some of these judges DO have clerkship openings, but they rely on receiving applications from the diligent students who go outside the convenient online system to discover the opportunity. Some of these judges use this method to reduce the number of applications received to only those from such diligent applicants. On the other hand, some of these judges DO NOT have clerkship openings because they already have term law clerks or career law clerks, or because they do not have law clerks at all on their staffs.

However, you cannot be certain which of these “no clerkship information available” judges is which. **Thus, we strongly recommend that you treat all of these “no clerkship information available” judges as “regular mail” judges and that you send them hard copy applications.** In doing so, you must recognize that some of the “no clerkship information available” judges are in fact not seeking clerks at all for one the reasons above. However, by applying to this group of judges, you will “capture” in your application process those judges who DO have clerkship openings, but who have simply not posted any information about the opening. Obviously, these judges will receive fewer applications, as most students will only apply to those affirmatively posting openings. Thus, your odds of receiving an interview invitation may improve with this narrow group of judges.

Helpful hint: Talk to your faculty! They may know of judges who are hiring and may connect you.

To apply ONLINE through OSCAR:

- a. **Step 1-** Download or order copies of your most recent transcript.
- b. **Step 2-** go to <https://oscar.uscourts.gov/> and create a login.

Click on the applicant registration and complete the registration form and your Profile. This is all self- explanatory. When prompted to include your class rank, round UP to the next higher category. For example, if you are top 11% indicate top 15% rather than “top 10%”. Once registered, you will have access to the database of federal judges who accept online applications through OSCAR.

- c. **Step 3 -** Download and review the “Oscar Applicant Guide.”

This guide, located under “Resources,” will provide you will all instructions necessary to prepare and complete online applications for any of the OSCAR judges to whom you wish to apply. In sum, you will upload resumes, cover letters,

writing samples and transcripts to the online system, and “build” application packages for each judge.

- d. **Step 4- Contact prospective recommenders and arrange for letters of recommendation in accordance with instructions below for Recommendation Letters.**
- e. **Step 5- Create your own “Grade Sheet” on OSCAR by typing in your transcript information into the online form.**
- f. **Step 6 – Upload the resume, cover letters, writing samples and other documents you will use to build your online applications to individual judges.**
- g. **Step 7- Designate the OSCAR judges to whom you will apply and upload necessary documents.** Note the application requirements for each particular judge on that judge’s page, as the requirements will vary from judge to judge.
- h. **Step 8 - Recommendation Letters-** On each individual judge’s page, designate the names of the individuals who have firmly agreed to serve as your recommenders. Once you do so, that recommender will be notified by email that you have selected them. The Career Services Office will also be notified of your recommender selections. This does not obviate the need to FIRST speak with your recommender before indicating them on OSCAR. It is also a good idea to submit to the CSO a list of your recommenders.
 - i. **Faculty Recommenders.** Ensure that your recommenders submit the letters they write to the Career Services Office no later than the designated deadline in accordance with the important instructions below. The Career Services Office or the faculty member will upload those recommendations to your “application package” for each judge. You will not upload any of your Faculty Recommendation Letters.
 - ii. **Non-Faculty (Employer) Recommenders.** Unlike faculty recommenders, you must ensure that your Employer Recommenders upload their recommendation letters directly to the OSCAR system. As soon as you identify an Employer Recommender on the OSCAR system, the employer will receive notice from the system on how to upload your recommendation letter and the employer must do it themselves with your assistance.

IMPORTANT NOTE: It is your responsibility to monitor the preparation of your letters of recommendation and to ensure that your faculty recommenders submit your letters to the Office of Career Services no later than your application deadline date(s). Career Services will not remind your recommenders of their obligations. If the CSO does not receive letters of recommendation from your recommenders by that date, you cannot be guaranteed that the recommendations will be uploaded before the date when judges will be able to view your online applications.

- i. **Step 9 – FINALIZE APPLICATION!!!** Once all required materials are complete and uploaded, click “finalize application” and your materials will be submitted to the judge for review on the established deadline date. (Remember: Submit your applications early to be safe.)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Do not click “FINALIZE APPLICATION” until you are CERTAIN that your application is complete (including recommendation letters) as you will NOT be able to edit the application in any way after you click “FINALIZE APPLICATION”.

**PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FOR JUDICIAL
CLERKSHIPS FROM AKRON LAW SCHOOL FACULTY:**

1. **Student requests letters of recommendation from professors** as far in advance of application as possible. Students shall notify professors that letters must be uploaded or e-mailed to the Office of Career Services by the specific application deadline. Students shall discuss with professor whether professor authorizes the CSO to sign on professor’s behalf.
2. **Student immediately emails** lawcareerplanning@uakron.edu and lets CSO know which professors are preparing recommendation letters and who will sign the letters.
3. **Federal and State Court Clerkship Applications**

a. **For Federal Court Clerkship Applications**

(i) Professors individually upload to OSCAR or provide CSO with electronic copy of letter by email at lawcareerplanning@uakron.edu by the specified due date(s). Professors confirm whether they will sign the letters themselves or if they authorize the use of electronic signature. Students are responsible for ensuring that faculty members meet all deadline. This is a strict deadline, as hundreds of individual regular mail letters must be prepared and still more letters must be uploaded for OSCAR judges.

b. **For State Court Clerkship Applications**

(i) Professors provide CSO with electronic copy of letter by email at lawcareerplanning@uakron.edu as soon as possible after request by student, and in appropriate advance time to accommodate application due date which student must determine and of which the student must inform the professor.

(ii) As soon as possible in advance of student’s preferred application mailing date, student provides CSO with an Excel spreadsheet (See Step 4 below under “Regular Mail and Email Applications”) containing the list of state judges (with complete addresses) to whom the letters should be addressed. Letters will be prepared and available to student or faculty member for signature seven (7) calendar days after receipt of both letter and properly formatted Excel spreadsheet.

4. Career Services produces the reference letters and envelopes and provides them to the faculty members for the faculty member’s signature.

- a. If the faculty member will sign all letters personally, Career Services will provide faculty member with the letters for signature. Faculty member will then return the signed letters to CSO upon completion. Career Services will then contact the student for student to pick up letters. **Student then prepares each application and mails all completed applications.**

5. Student should include reference letters with the rest of the application materials. The reference letters should be in individual sealed envelopes addressed to each individual judge.

2. **Regular Mail and Email Applications**

a. **Step 1**- Download or order copies of your most recent transcript.

b. **Step 2**- Request Recommendation Letters.

- (i) Choose recommenders who will prepare your required letters of recommendation. Most judges require three (3) recommenders. Two faculty recommenders and one legal employer recommender are ideal. Three faculty recommenders are also appropriate.
- (ii) Contact your recommenders personally to inquire if they are willing and able to write a strong letter of recommendation in support of your applications. Instruct them to upload to OSCAR or send the electronic version of any letter of recommendation to Career Services by your deadline date(s).

c. **Step 3**- Preparing Recommendation Letters

- (i) **For NON- FACULTY reference letter writers (i.e., employers) you should ask the writer what you can do to alleviate any burden on them.** At a minimum, you should supply the NON-FACULTY recommendation letter writers with mail merge data for each judge to whom you expect a letter to be prepared. You should also arrange either to pick up the sealed letters or provide postage for mailing to you so they can be included by you in the final application packages you mail to your judges. You could also volunteer to do the actual printing yourself.
- (ii) **FACULTY RECOMMENDATION LETTERS.** Faculty recommendation letters are prepared through the Career Services Office. You must adhere to the above-named procedures in order to obtain such letters of recommendation.

d. **Step 4**- Compiling Your Regular Mail Application:

- (i) All required application materials for an individual judge should be bound together with an appropriately sized binder clip.

- (ii) Individual elements of the application that are more than one page (e.g. writing sample) should be stapled individually and put in binder clip.
- (iii) All letters of recommendation should be sealed in their properly addressed envelopes and sealed envelope put in binder clip.
- (iv) All individual elements of the application should contain your name in the event they separate from the rest of your materials.

3. Additional Resources for Federal Court Applications.

- a. The U.S. Courts site www.uscourts.gov provides links to the websites of individual courts where you will find the most current lists of all judges sitting in that court. In conjunction with the Judicial Yellow Book, this site will ensure you apply to all judges in your regions of consideration. You will also often find a human resources/jobs/employment/career opportunities link.
- b. Newly Appointed Judges. Judges who have been recently appointed do not receive the large number of applications that established judges receive, simply because most law students are not aware of these judges. To determine whether a federal judicial nominee has been approved by the Senate, check:

http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/a_three_sections_with_teasers/nominations.htm

- Click on “Confirmed” or “Pending in Committee” under “Nominations Received – Civilian Nominations”
- Scroll down to “In the Committee on the Judiciary”
- I.e., “Jimmie V. Reyna ... to be United States Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit.”

B. State Judicial Clerkships

1. **Step 1**- Download or order copies of your most recent transcript.
2. **Step 2** – “The Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkships,” **Current Edition**. Start your research here. It explains each state’s judicial clerkship application procedures at each level with salary and contact information. (Note: Some state court websites provide instruction as to how to apply. We recommend you check these websites and heed state website instruction where it differs from the Vermont Guide.) You may access the Vermont Law School Guide on-line at <http://forms.vermontlaw.edu/career/guides/>.

Click on “Access the Guide”

Click on “Guide to Judicial Clerkship Procedures” or on a specific state

Please note that the Vermont Law School Guide username and password change occasionally. Please check with the Career Services Office for the most up to date information.

3. **Step 3**- Other sources of information. Some helpful resources are available on the CSO's webpage under in the Resource Library and herein.

V. Tips for Preparing the Application Materials You Need to Apply for Federal and State Judicial Clerkships.

Generally, your application package must include: Cover Letter, Resume, Transcript, Writing Sample, and Three Sealed Letters of Reference.

- A. **Cover Letters.** Explain in the first paragraph why you want to work for a particular judge and/or why you want to clerk in that court. In the second paragraph explain the skills you will bring to the court and examples of how you have demonstrated these skills. As with any cover letter, you must capture the judge's interest immediately. Work hard on your letters and tailor them to the judge and/or court.

The Career Services Office suggests writing several categories of letters:

1. To your "dream" judges on which applications you will work hardest;
 2. Letters based on your academic credentials to send to judges you think base their decisions mostly on academic qualification;
 3. Letters based on your volunteer/public service experience to send to judges you think might evidence a preference for this type of experience, or who come from such a background;
 4. Separate letters to district judges, and magistrate judges based on the differing nature of the work; and
 5. Separate letters to the judges for each state you might apply to, uniquely identifying the reason for your interest in practicing in the community.
- B. **Resume.** Have your resume reviewed again to make sure it is the best it can be for this important competitive process.
 - C. **Transcript.** You may submit a student issued copy of your official law school transcript which you can obtain from the Registrar's Office. Be sure to request transcripts early. For June applications you should request your transcript no later than May. A small number of judges may also request your undergraduate transcript, so it is a good idea to order one early just in case.
 - D. **Writing Sample.** You should choose an analytical piece of writing that is your own work product. A brief or memorandum is a good choice, although your scholarly writing may be appropriate if it shows your ability to analyze and distinguish legal issues. Include a cover sheet explaining the source and nature of the writing sample.

- E. Reference Letters.** You will generally need three letters of reference (also known as “recommendation letters”) from faculty members or attorneys for whom you have worked (preferably three from faculty or two from faculty and one from a legal employer). When you ask professors and legal employers whether they will write such letters for you, talk openly with these individuals about why you are competitive, so they are enthusiastic about writing powerful letters tailored to the duties involved in clerking.

Make sure all of your materials are impeccable and ERROR FREE! Have the CSO, a friend or relative proofread your materials for those difficult to spot errors.

VI. How Do I Address Correspondence to a Judge?

The proper address and salutation for particular judges will vary depending on the court in which the Judge or Justice sits. Most situations are described below.

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Judge's Title as it should appear on letter and envelope</u> | <u>Salutation</u> |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| FEDERAL COURTS: | | |
| U.S. Supreme Court: | | |
| Chief Justice | The Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court | Dear Chief Justice (surname): |
| Associate Justice | Associate Justice (full name) The United States Supreme Court | Dear Justice (surname): |
| U.S. Courts of Appeals: | | |
| Chief Judge, Senior Judge, Judge | The Honorable (full name) (position), United States Court of Appeals | Dear Judge (surname): |
| U.S. District Court: | | |
| Chief Judge, Senior Judge, Judge | The Honorable (full name), (position), United States District Court | Dear Judge (surname): |
| Magistrate Judge | | Dear Judge (surname): |
| Other Federal Courts: | | |

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

Chief Judge

The Honorable (full name)
(Position), Name of Court

Dear Judge (surname):

STATE COURTS

State Supreme Court:

Chief Justice

The Honorable (full name)
Chief Justice, Supreme Court
for the
(State/Commonwealth) of
(state)

Dear Chief Justice
(surname):

Justice

The Honorable (full name)
Supreme Court for the
(State/Commonwealth) of
(state)

Dear Justice (surname):

Other State Courts:

Judge

The Honorable (full name)
Title of Judge, Court

Dear Judge (surname):

VII. Interviewing with a Judge.

If you are called for an interview, schedule the appointment as soon as possible. You do not want the judge to interview someone else and offer the position to another candidate before you can ever get there. GO IMMEDIATELY!

Be aware that you will need to make and fund your own travel arrangements, but Career Services has limited funding available, made possible through the Scott Eller Professional Development fund.

At the time of the interview, everything the judge knows about you comes from the materials you submitted. Review your application materials carefully before the interview and be prepared to thoroughly answer any questions related to them. Because judges work so closely with their clerks, interviews can cover a lot of legal and non-legal territory and can include interviews by the judge's clerks and staff members. The judge is attempting to get to know the candidate as a person and as a lawyer. You could be asked questions about a particular case or ruling. It is important that you know about the judge's recent or important decisions and the types of cases presently on the court's docket. Biographical information about the judge is available on Bloomberg or on-line at www.fjc.gov. As with any interview, the applicant should take advantage of the opportunity to ask inquisitive, well prepared questions of the judge. **Do not, however, ask questions about specific matters currently pending before the judge.**

The judge may ask questions about grades, courses, other clerkship applications you have pending, long term-goals or how you feel about certain issues or decisions. Because of the close

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

working relationship between a judge and his or her clerk, interviews may include discussion of more personal information also. Questions such as “Who is your favorite Supreme Court Justice and why?” are also possible.

The applicant can prepare for the interview by becoming familiar with past decisions rendered by the judge, talking to past judicial externs or judicial clerks, and faculty who may know or be familiar with the judge and his or her jurisprudence.

Come to the Career Services Office to polish your interviewing skills in preparation for your interview.

VIII. How Do I Address a Judge in Person?

When speaking to a judge in person, say, “Hello, Justice Kennedy” or Judge Smith, it’s nice to meet you”. Always use the judge’s proper title and last name (see chart above) until he/she directs otherwise. Never use “Mr.” or “Ms.” or “Mrs.” Or “Honorable”.

IX. Important Resources.

You are encouraged to use the following resources:

Federal Court Resources:

- Almanac of the Federal Judiciary Available on Westlaw’s AFJ Database (The Almanac provides detailed biographic information about individual judges).
- The Judicial Clerk Directory (WLD- CLERK), is available on WESTLAW.
- Judicial Profiles and Case Information on Bloomberg, Westlaw, and Lexis. Biographical sketches and case information and analytics. Updated regularly.
- Bloomberg’s Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges and Clerks available online.

State Court Resources:

- The Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures, Current Edition (As described above, this is a very important guide that provides state by state explanation of state court clerkship procedures at all levels with contact and salary information.
- The NALP State Judicial Clerkship Directory is attached herein.

Additional online resources for clerkships and post- graduate jobs with federal and state courts:

COURT SITES:

www.courts.state.va.us

www.uscourts.gov

www.oalj.dol.gov

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

www.ustaxcourt.gov

www.fjc.gov (with biographies of federal judges)

www.fmja.org

OHIO COURTS

Ohio Supreme Court

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov

Mid-Level Appellate Court – Court of Appeals -- Students should apply to the District Court Administrator for the district in which they want to clerk. There are twelve (12) Court of Appeals districts.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/judsystem/districtcourts/default.asp

First District Court of Appeals – Hamilton County

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district1/default.asp

Second District Court of Appeals – Champaign, Clarke, Darke, Greene, Miami, and Montgomery counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district2/default.asp

Third District Court of Appeals – Allen, Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Logan, Marion, Mercer, Paulding, Putnam, Seneca, Shelby, Union, Van Wert, and Wyandot counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district3/default.asp

Fourth District Court of Appeals -- Adams, Athens, Gallia, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Vinton, and Washington counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district4/default.asp

Fifth District Court of Appeals -- Ashland, Coshocton, Delaware, Fairfield, Guernsey, Holmes, Knox, Licking, Morgan, Morrow, Muskingum, Perry, Richland, Stark, and Tuscarawas counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district5/default.asp

Sixth District Court of Appeals -- Erie, Fulton, Huron, Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky, Williams, and Wood counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district6/default.asp

Seventh District Court of Appeals -- Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Jefferson, Mahoning, Monroe, and Noble counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district7/default.asp

Eighth District Court of Appeals -- Cuyahoga County.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district8/default.asp

Ninth District Court of Appeals -- Lorain, Medina, Summit and Wayne counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district9/default.asp

Tenth District Court of Appeals -- Franklin County.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district10/default.asp

Eleventh District Court of Appeals -- Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, Portage, and Trumbull counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district11/default.asp

Twelfth District Court of Appeals --Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Fayette, Madison, Preble, and Warren counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/districtCourts/district12/default.asp

Trial Courts: Court of Common Pleas – You can find links the courts of common pleas under their counties.

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JudSystem/trialCourts/default.asp

X. Frequently Asked Questions.

After you have made the decision to apply for a judicial clerkship, you will still have many questions about the process. We urge you to meet with Assistant Dean O'Brien to discuss the best way to proceed. The task of deciding which courts and judges to apply takes some effort. The questions most frequently asked by applicants include:

- **How do I decide which writing sample to submit?**

Your writing sample should be your best legal writing to date. Ideally, it is a piece of legal analytical work such as a redacted or publicly filed memorandum you drafted for your summer employer, or a sample from your Legal Research & Writing class. Reread, correct and revise whatever you submit so it is your best work and a reflection of your current abilities. Consult with others about your choice. Have others proofread your sample to ensure it is perfect.

- **What do I do after I send my applications to the judges?**

Many federal and state judges send notices informing applicants they have received their applications. Some do not. When sent, this notice usually gives instructions on the next step. If you have additional favorable awards, honors, or grades to report in the interim, write a letter to the judge updating your file; include your revised resume.

- **Will I have the opportunity to interview personally with the judge?**

Yes, but ONLY if you are being considered for the position. If you are granted an interview and have also applied to other judges in that area, it is appropriate and wise to contact those other judges to let them know that you will be in the area to interview with Judge "X" and to ask if they would also like to schedule an interview while you are there. If they too are interested in your application, they may arrange to see you.

- **How will the judges decide who to interview?**

Grades play a very important part in the selection of judicial clerks. The higher the court, the more important grades become. Writing skills are also very important. The

judge will also likely put a great deal of weight on references and/or may weigh heavily the law school or geographic area the student is from.

- **What will a judicial clerkship interview be like?**

Judicial clerkship interviews vary widely. The interview can be brief or it can take a number of hours. The current clerks and the judge's assistant may or may not be present for all or part of the interview. However, as a judicial clerk, you will work very closely with the judge, and therefore you will be under close scrutiny both personally and professionally. The interview may reflect this by posing hypotheticals as well as including more personal examination of attitudes and opinions. Prospective clerks may also interview with current clerks individually. When your interview is scheduled, inquire with whom you will meet.

- **What do I do if I am offered a position?**

The decision to apply for a judicial clerkship is an important one. THE DECISION SHOULD BE MADE WHEN YOU DECIDE TO APPLY – NOT WHEN AN OFFER IS MADE. You should apply only to judges from whom you would accept an offer when made. Meet with the Career Services Office to evaluate your own strategy. If offered a position, you should accept immediately, and promptly withdraw other outstanding offers. DO NOT SAY "NO" TO A JUDGE WHO OFFERS YOU A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP.

- **What will I do after my clerkship ends?**

A judicial clerkship will increase your marketability dramatically. Law firms sometimes call current judicial clerks to ask them to interview, even before the judicial clerk applies to the firm! If offered a clerkship, you may wish to inquire of the judge once you begin whether you will be allowed to start your permanent job search toward the end of your clerkship. Some judges do not allow this, which should not cause you undue concern, because many law firms will express an interest in a judicial clerk but will not grant a formal interview anyway until the completion of the clerkship to ensure that there is no appearance of impropriety.

Questions a Judge Might Ask a Judicial Clerkship Applicant

1. Why do you want to clerk? Why do you want to clerk for *me*?
2. Why this particular court?
3. What do you hope to learn from a clerkship?
4. Why do you want to clerk in this city (state, region)?
5. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
6. What qualities do you have that might make you a valuable law clerk?
7. What are your short and long range legal career goals?
8. Where do you hope to practice after your clerkship?
9. What type of law interests you the most?
10. Describe your work experience.
11. Describe the work you have completed for your law journal.
12. Tell me about the courses/grades/professors you had in law school.
13. To which judges/courts have you applied?

The University of Akron School of Law

Career Services Office

14. How would you approach this particular issue/case/problem?
15. Do you prefer to work with others? Independently?
16. How do you view the long hours and low pay associated with judicial clerkships?
17. If you and I disagree about a certain issue, would you have a problem drafting an opinion incorporating my viewpoint?
18. What interests do you have outside of law school? Hobbies?
19. What questions do you have for me?

Questions an Applicant Might ask the Current Clerk

1. Describe a typical day as a clerk in this court.
2. What responsibilities do you have?
3. Describe your relationship with the judge.
4. What are the judge's greatest strengths, weaknesses?
5. What contact do you have with the other clerks or practicing attorneys in the area?
6. Tell me about this city/state/region as a place to live.
7. How has this clerkship affected your job search?
8. How has this clerkship affected your career goals?
9. What percentage of time do you spend in court, conducting research, drafting opinions, interacting with the judge?
10. What criteria seem to affect the judge's selection of a clerk?

Questions an Applicant Might want to ask a Judge

1. What criteria do you use in selecting a clerk?
2. What will be the scope of my responsibilities?
3. What is the nature of your docket?
4. Could we discuss the issues you had to reconcile in your recent decision of *Doe v. Smith*? (Do not pick a controversial case where the judge has been criticized for the opinion)
5. What is your timetable for making a decision?
6. Do your clerks have contact with local attorneys?
7. Describe your legal philosophy.
8. What do you see as the primary role of this court?
9. What percentage of my time would I spend in court, conducting research, drafting opinions?
10. When do you prefer your clerks look for permanent jobs?
11. Do you allow your clerks to accept with a firm before the clerkship period is completed?

The University of Akron School of Law
Career Services Office

SAMPLE CLERKSHIP COVER LETTER

March 10, 2019

Dear Judge _____:

In reference to your upcoming law clerk opening in __ (INSERT DATE OF OPENING) __, I would like to submit an application for your consideration. I am a life-long resident of Northeast Ohio, an Alumnus of The Ohio State University and am currently in my second year of law school at the University of Akron School of Law. I am excited by the possibility to work for a local judge. I am confident you will find that I am an ideal law clerk candidate because I am an outstanding researcher, I am a talented legal writer, and I have performed exceptionally well in Law School.

I have consistently developed my research skills through my academic and professional experiences. In recognition of my high-level of legal research and writing skills, I received the CALI award for the highest grade in my Legal Research and Writing II course. Moreover, I was an Assistant Editor for the 2018-2019 *Akron Law Review*, performing research, citation, and text checks for the Law Review. I am currently one of the Articles Editors for the 2018-19 *Akron Law Review*, in which my responsibilities have included reviewing and making offers on articles to be published, as well as acting as the Law Review Liaison for the Miller-Becker Institute of Professional Responsibility's yearly symposium. Additionally, I have strengthened my research skills as a law clerk at ABC Law Office. In this position, I was required to research a diverse set of legal issues on a daily basis. Furthermore, I have worked on editing *Environmental Law, Cases and Materials, Third Edition*, as the research assistant for Professor John Smith. This research experience will help me effectively and efficiently perform any task assigned to me in your chambers.

Throughout my education, I have continuously developed my writing skills. My work during college and Law School has prepared me well for any writing tasks I would perform as your law clerk. While in undergraduate school, I was invited to present the results of my senior honors research paper at the Ohio Association of Political Scientists yearly convention. In Law School, I received the CALI award in Legal Research and Writing II for my appellate brief. As the law clerk at a small Akron firm, I drafted numerous documents for litigation, many of which went on to win judgments in court. These experiences have helped craft my legal writing ability, a skill that will help me produce high quality work for your court.

Finally, I believe my academic performance in law school is indicative of my ability to perform as a highly effective law clerk. In my two years, I have received the highest grade in the class in Civil Procedure I, Legal Analysis, Research and Writing II, Criminal Law, Property I, and Professional Responsibility. I am also currently ranked number seven in my class, with a grade point average of 3.51. I have not limited my law school experience to solely academic learning. I am currently on the Editorial Board of the *Akron Law Review*, being promoted to the position of Articles Editor after my time as an Assistant Editor during the 2018-2019 school year. I have

The University of Akron School of Law
Career Services Office

also volunteered with the Summit County Legal Defenders Office, the Akron Bar Association's Street Law program, and the Law School Admissions Office. I also participated in Akron Law's Expungement Clinic. I believe the experience I have gained in law school will help me succeed as your law clerk.

I believe I would make an excellent clerk in your chambers. My research and writing skills have prepared me for this experience. Moreover, my academic performance is indicative of my ability to produce high-quality work. I would perform just as exceptionally in your chambers as I have thus far performed in law school. I am also friendly and outgoing and my former colleagues and supervisors will tell you that I am a team-player, a fast learner, and driven to succeed. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you further.

Best regards,

Zippy Law Student

The University of Akron School of Law Career Services Office Federal Judicial Clerkships Information Sheet (Post-Graduate Positions)

❖ The following information is provided to students as an introduction to the application process for federal clerkships. Please inform the Career Services Office if you are interested in federal or state clerkships so we may work together in identifying potential clerkships and as you draft your application materials.

❖ The Administrative Office of the Federal Courts has an online application resource called OSCAR (Online System for Clerkship Application & Review) where *some* federal judges post information regarding their open law clerk or staff attorney positions and where applicants may apply for these positions. Additional detailed information about the application process can be found on OSCAR (www.oscar.uscourts.gov).

❖ Judicial clerkship applicants must be proactive in their pursuit of a clerkship. Information on OSCAR may be updated at any time as needed by judges, so students should either check the website on a regular basis or create a search agent in order to receive email notifications about new postings. Keep in mind that OSCAR is a good resource to consult, but it is not the only avenue to pursue regarding federal clerkships.

❖ Student applicants may apply beginning in February of 2L year (2D, 3E). Some federal judges will accept applications from students during the fall or spring of their 3L year. For Class of 2020 grads, applications will be released June 17, 2019. For Class of 2021 grads, applications will be released June 15, 2020.

❖ Some federal judges do not use OSCAR to post their open clerkship positions or to collect application materials. Students must review the judicial profile information that is provided by the judges on OSCAR. In some cases, you will see application instructions for open positions; in others, you will see an advisory note that the judge is not hiring new law clerks; and in others, you will not see any information at all. In the latter case, students should consult the judge's biography on his or her court website in order to see if the judge

has posted any clerkship application information there (this occurs in rare instances).

❖ If OSCAR and the judge's court website are silent as to a judge's open clerkship positions, students are advised to apply via U.S. Mail. Some judges will not post their open clerkship positions because they receive many unsolicited applications and interview from that pool of candidates.

❖ When applying via OSCAR, applicants must create a free account and complete all necessary sections before an application is considered finalized. Students are encouraged to watch the videos on OSCAR before starting their applications. Students are encouraged to finalize all applications *before the June release dates*.

❖ Unless otherwise directed, applicants should submit the following application materials:

- *cover letter and resume
- *writing sample (10-15 pages)
- *letters of recommendation (3)
- *law school transcript (unofficial)

❖ Apply to only those judges from whom you are prepared to accept an employment offer on the spot. When a judge selects his or her law clerk from among numerous applicants, the judge assumes that the offer will be accepted immediately. Failing to do so could adversely impact your professional reputation. Judges are advised to hold offers open for 48 hours.

❖ Applicants are encouraged to have their application documents reviewed by the Career Services Office prior to submitting them via OSCAR or mailing them to judges (samples available at <http://www.uakron.edu/law/docs/Career-planning.pdf>).

❖ Candidates are encouraged to do a mock interview and to review the list of questions that are typically asked during a clerkship interview, which can be found on the Resource Page: <http://www.uakron.edu/law/career-services/resource-library.dot>.

Questions? Contact the Career Services Office at (330) 972-8540 or lawcareerplanning@uakron.edu or consult the "FAQ" section on OSCAR.

Sources: OSCAR Website and various NALP Annual Conference Handouts. Revised May 2019.

NALP'S JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP SECTION

STATE COURT WORK GROUP

Insight and Inside Information for Select State Court Clerkships



This document was compiled from information provided by Career Services Office representatives from law schools all over the country. Their contributions are acknowledged and appreciated. This document should be read in conjunction with The Guide to State Court Judicial Clerkships, published by The Vermont Law School. A PDF of the most current version of this document is available in the Judicial Clerkships Section of the NALP website.

November 2018

Table of Contents¹

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| ALABAMA..... | 3 |
| ARIZONA | 3 |
| CALIFORNIA | 3 |
| COLORADO | 5 |
| CONNECTICUT..... | 7 |
| DELAWARE..... | 9 |
| DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA..... | 12 |
| FLORIDA | 13 |
| GEORGIA | 14 |
| ILLINOIS..... | 16 |
| INDIANA..... | 17 |
| IOWA | 18 |
| MARYLAND | 19 |
| MASSACHUSETTS..... | 21 |
| MICHIGAN..... | 23 |
| MINNESOTA | 25 |
| MISSOURI..... | 26 |
| NEBRASKA..... | 28 |
| NEVADA SUPREME COURT | 29 |
| NEW JERSEY..... | 29 |
| NEW YORK | 30 |
| NORTH CAROLINA..... | 33 |
| OHIO | 34 |
| OREGON..... | 34 |
| PENNSYLVANIA | 34 |
| RHODE ISLAND..... | 36 |
| TENNESSEE..... | 36 |
| TEXAS..... | 39 |
| VIRGINIA | 40 |
| WASHINGTON..... | 42 |
| WEST VIRGINIA..... | 43 |
| WYOMING | 44 |

¹ Thank you to all NALP Judicial Clerkship Section members who have contributed to this document. If you are able to contribute an entry for a missing state, please submit that material to Laura Woodson at LWoodson@UGA.edu.

ALABAMA

ALABAMA SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of Alabama has the authority to review decisions rendered by the other courts of the state and certain legal matters over which no other court has jurisdiction. The Supreme Court consists of 9 Justices, a Chief Justice and 8 associate justices, who employ permanent Staff Attorneys. For Staff Attorney openings, check the Court's website at <http://judicial.alabama.gov/supreme.cfm>.

ALABAMA COURT OF CIVIL APPEALS and ALABAMA COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS

These are the intermediate courts of appeal for the state. The civil court may hire clerks each year but the criminal court employs only permanent Staff Attorneys. Check the court website at: <http://judicial.alabama.gov/civil.cfm>

CIRCUIT COURTS

The trial courts of general jurisdiction are called Circuit Courts. There are 41 Circuit Courts in the state and they are the trial courts of general jurisdiction and also act as the courts of appeal for the probate, municipal and district courts of the state. Some larger metropolitan Circuit Courts may hire law clerks. Interested students should apply directly to judges in these courts, typically in early spring of 2L year.

ARIZONA

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

The Arizona Supreme Court consists of seven Justices, all of whom post their judicial clerkship application requirements online at <http://www.azcourts.gov/mediaroom/Press-Releases-News/Judicial-Law-Clerk-Applications>. Each Justice typically hires 2 clerks each year, for 1-year terms.

Application materials must include a cover letter, resume, law school transcript, undergraduate transcript, writing sample, and two or three letters of recommendation. Application packets should be emailed to: LCapps@courts.az.gov. Applicants must identify in the subject line and body of message the Justice(s) to whom they are applying. Note: The server will reject email attachments that exceed 8MB.

ARIZONA COURT OF APPEALS

The Court of Appeals is comprised of two Divisions. Division One, in Phoenix, has 16 judges and Division Two, in Tucson, has six judges.

Division One judges typically hire term clerks annually. Interested applicants should obtain information from the court's website, see <http://www.azcourts.gov/coa1/Career-Volunteer/Law-Clerk-Openings>, and may also need to contact individual chambers in spring of the 2L year in order to ascertain specifics.

Division Two judges typically hire term clerks annually. Interested applicants should obtain information from the court's website, see <https://www.appeals2.az.gov/apl2.cfm> (click "Judicial Law Clerk applications") to determine which judges will be hiring, what their timelines will be, and what application materials are required.

ARIZONA TRIAL COURT

Arizona's trial court is the Superior Court. It is a single entity with locations in each county. The counties with the largest number of courts are Maricopa County (Phoenix) and Pima County (Tucson). Maricopa County Superior Court does not have traditional law clerks; instead, the court hires a few Law Researchers and Law-trained Bailiffs. See <http://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/jobs/index.asp>. There are no fixed application timelines; openings are posted as vacancies occur. Pima County Superior Court maintains a pool of law clerk applicants from which judges may choose when clerkships become available. Most law clerks also perform bailiff duties. See <https://agency.governmentjobs.com/scpima/default.cfm>. Other trial court websites are listed here: <http://www.azcourts.gov/AZ-Courts/Superior-Court>.

CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT

The Justices of the California Supreme Court generally do not hire term law clerks, except in a few rare cases. Justice Cuellar, Justice Kruger, and Justice Liu often hire term law clerks, however, these positions are extremely competitive. The Justices tend to hire clerks with previous clerkship experience - and sometimes hire clerks without a previous clerkship but only those who will bring at least one year of post-graduate practice experience. The Justices tend to hire 2-3 years in advance of the term.

How to apply:

Email a cover letter, resume, law school transcript, writing sample and three letters of recommendation in ONE PDF packet to:

Justice Cuellar: clerkships.cuellar@jud.ca.gov

Justice Kruger: Clerkships.Kruger@jud.ca.gov

Justice Liu: clerkships.liu@jud.ca.gov

For other Justices

Check the California Courts website for openings:

<http://www.courts.ca.gov/careers.htm?rdeLocaleAttr=en>

CALIFORNIA COURT OF APPEALS

Justices of the California Court of Appeals typically do not hire term law clerks. It is more common for them to have permanent staff attorneys, who have a minimum of five years of experience. Other staff attorney positions with the Habeas Corpus Counsel or appellate attorney positions may become available, but again, these positions are typically for experienced attorneys.

CALIFORNIA SUPERIOR COURTS

Some superior courts hire recent grads, namely the Los Angeles and San Francisco Superior Courts. The other California Superior Courts (including San Diego) generally hire experienced attorneys for staff attorney positions.

Los Angeles Superior Court

The Los Angeles Superior Court hires term law clerks. While hiring tends to occur in late spring/early summer of 3L year, recruitment can be open and continuous. Refer to the court's website for openings: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/lasc>.

San Francisco Superior Court

The San Francisco Superior Court hires Legal Research Assistants. These are one-year term positions typically available to graduating law students. The court will post an announcement in January or February of the year for which the position will start, which is in August or September.

Other California Superior Courts

Other counties seem to hire staff attorneys who have post-graduate practice experience. Refer to the county court website for further hiring information or for job postings.

COLORADO

COLORADO SUPREME COURT

Application requirements for the seven justices of the Colorado Supreme Court are available at: http://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/Supreme_Court/Applicants.cfm. It is best to follow the specific application requirements for each justice as there are minor variations between them.

While the website identifies a specific time frame during which some justices accept and review applications, it does not provide this information for all of them. Some justices conduct interviews as early as the summer between the 2L and 3L year. Most justices complete their hiring in September or October. Therefore, to maximize consideration by all justices, it is best to apply for these clerkships in the summer after the second year of law school, as soon as possible after receiving second year grades and class rank.

Like most other judges, the Colorado Supreme Court justices tend to seek clerks with strong writing skills. In addition to featuring traditional legal writing experience on the resume (e.g. Law Review; Moot Court; Legal Writing Competitions, etc.) applicants should consider listing any significant non-legal writing experience on their resumes.

COLORADO COURT OF APPEALS

The Colorado Court of Appeals consists of 22 judges, most of whom post their judicial clerkship application requirements at http://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/Court_of_Appeals/Applicants.cfm. It is best to follow the specific application requirements for each judge as there are significant variations between them. Where the website does not provide specific information on a judge's application requirements, applicants should send a standard application packet consisting of a cover letter, resume, transcript, writing sample, and three letters of recommendation.

The website identifies a specific application time frame for some judges, but it does not provide this information for all them. While most judges complete their hiring during the fall, in recent years, some judges have hired as early as July while others have waited until spring. Given the wide variability among the judges in the timing of their law clerk hiring, it is recommended that students apply to each judge as early as possible in the time frames set forth in their individual hiring procedures on the website. For judges who do not publish their hiring procedures on the website, it is recommended that students apply in the late summer to early fall of their third year.

Colorado Court of Appeals judges also vary in the way they staff their chambers with law clerks. Judges may choose to have one or two law clerks. Those who opt to have one law clerk typically choose to have an administrative assistant in lieu of a second clerk. Judges who have two law clerks can opt to have permanent clerks or term law clerks. Some judges have one permanent clerk and one term clerk, while others opt for two term clerks. As of summer 2009, all judges have at least one term clerk. Most term clerk positions are for one year; however, at least two judges require a two-year term.

Finally, some Colorado Court of Appeals judges require candidates to perform a substantive research and writing exercise as part of the interview process. Examples have included post-interview legal writing assignments and asking interviewees to come to the interview prepared to discuss a particular legal issue.

COLORADO TRIAL COURTS

The Colorado trial courts are organized into twenty judicial districts, each covering one or more counties. A list of the trial courts is available at <http://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/Index.cfm>.

Colorado district court judges post their clerkship positions at <http://www.courts.state.co.us/Careers/Index.cfm>.

In general, Colorado District Courts do not have a uniform clerkship cycle. Most judges post positions when they receive notice that their current clerk is leaving and will typically seek to fill the positions as soon as possible after a vacancy occurs. Accordingly, students interested in these positions should check the website regularly and apply as soon as possible after a position is posted. While an opening could occur at any time, most openings tend to appear between April and September. As a result, most clerks obtain these positions over the summer after graduating from law school.

Unlike the other Colorado District Courts, the Twentieth Judicial District, which covers Boulder County, has a uniform clerkship cycle. Clerks on this court typically start work in September and complete their clerkships in a year. Positions are typically posted sometime between November and January in the student's third year of law school and hiring for the positions usually occurs in the spring.

The Colorado State Judicial Branch requires applicants for trial court clerkships to submit a Colorado Judicial Department Employment Application, which is available at <http://www.courts.state.co.us/Careers/Index.cfm>. Individual job postings may not specify what other materials are required, but it is generally a good idea to submit a cover letter, resume, writing sample, transcript, and a list of 3 to 5 references.

Depending on the court, judges may be assigned to civil, criminal, domestic, juvenile, or probate dockets. Larger courts, such as the Denver District Court (2nd Judicial District) will often assign judges to a docket handling specific types of cases (e.g. criminal or civil). The judges on courts with specialized dockets often rotate from one type of docket to another on a periodic basis. Other courts assign judges to "mixed" dockets, meaning that each judge will preside over different types of cases. Frequently, law clerk job postings do not identify the judge or the docket associated with the law clerk position. Therefore, applicants may want to call the court's district administrator or clerk's office before applying. This information is available on the State Judicial Branch Website.

Very few, if any, Colorado state court judges require applicants to take the Colorado Bar Examination.

CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT SUPREME COURT

Most of the judges on this court now have one permanent clerk and one term clerk.

The court opens its application process in May and typically has a stated application deadline in mid-June. The court now requires application materials to be submitted via a centralized email collection process. Applicants are encouraged to submit all their materials to the court in

a single email. Letters of recommendation can be submitted directly to the court by the recommender.

Applicants should plan to be available on very short notice as the court typically conducts its interviews immediately after the application closing date. In recent years, the court has concluded its hiring process by early July.

CONNECTICUT APPELLATE COURT

The court hires clerks for its current Judges as well as for the pool of Judge Trial Referees (retired Judges and Justices who are sitting on a reduced schedule). Typically each of the current Judges will hire one term clerk. Clerks who are hired by the Judge Trial Referees (JTRs) will often work with two or three JTRs.

The court opens its application cycle in July and has an early August application deadline. The court now accepts application materials by email. There is no particular advantage to getting materials submitted early in the process as the court does not extend interview invitations until September.

Interview dates are set and announced before the court begins accepting applications. Typically interviews are scheduled in late September or early October. Applicants will generally only receive interview invitations one or two weeks prior to the scheduled interview dates. Thus, applicants should plan to be available on the set interview days.

The court will notify selected candidates of their interview schedules by email. As all of the interviews are centrally scheduled by the court, an applicant will receive a full schedule if he/she has secured more than one interview. The court attempts to schedule multiple interviews for candidates all on one day to reduce the need for candidates to be at the court for multiple days.

Once interviews are completed, successful candidates will often hear back quickly from judges who are extending them offers. The court generally completes its hiring process by late October.

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH – OFFICE OF LEGAL RESEARCH (TRIAL COURT)

The Connecticut Judicial Branch participates in a number of fall job fairs and a variety of on-campus recruiting programs. If their representatives come to your school's on-campus recruiting program, students are strongly encouraged (almost required) to submit their materials for consideration through that process. Students who do not participate in that process may be disadvantaged in the process. If the Judicial Branch does not come to your campus, and your students cannot interview with their representatives at a job fair in the fall, they can submit their materials directly to the Judicial Branch.

The initial on-campus/job fair interview is a largely informational interview. Interviewers will describe the Judicial Branch's clerkship program as well as detail the next steps in the application process. Interviewers want to leave the initial interview knowing that applicants are interested in dedicating their clerkship to legal research and writing and that they understand they will not be assigned to a judge.

Following the initial interview, applicants will be required to submit a complete application packet, typically by the end of October.

Second round (on-site) interviews are usually scheduled during January and February. Applicants will be given a packet of materials to review in advance of the interview and asked to complete a one hour writing exercise based on those materials during the interview. Applicants will also meet with Judicial Branch attorneys for a formal interview. The whole process usually lasts about 2 hours.

The Judicial Branch will make its hiring decisions in late March or early April. Applicants are clearly told at the conclusion of their on-site interview not to contact the Judicial Branch about decisions. No information will be available until hiring decisions are made and those decisions cannot be made outside of the pre-established process (regardless of what other offers an applicant may have pending).

When an offer is made, it is a general offer. Selected candidates are not promised a court location or a precise start date. Candidates are asked to indicate their preferences as to location and start date. Those preferences are accommodated where possible, with candidates typically getting one of their top two choices.

DELAWARE

DELAWARE CHANCERY COURT

Practitioners of corporate law consider the Delaware Chancery Court to be the premier chancery court in the United States. The five judges (a Chancellor and four Vice Chancellors) each hire two clerks for one year terms. Applicants should have top academic credentials, a demonstrated interest in corporate law and a number of corporate focused courses on their transcripts. In the past the court has hired in accordance with federal hiring plan dates so you can assume they will monitor hiring activity in the federal courts. In 2018, they conducted interviews in March for the 2019 court term. Be prepared to answer substantive questions on corporate law and/or to take a written exam that tests issue spotting and writing style. The judges cooperate with each other in the hiring process. You may arrive for an interview with one judge and actually interview with more than one. Although you may get multiple interviews you will only get one offer.

DELAWARE SUPREME COURT

The timing of hiring varies by justice but typically in the late summer/early fall one year ahead. None of the justices favors Delaware residents or applicants planning on practicing in Delaware. In the past, they have hired students right out of school. Justice Berger looks for clerks who are self-sufficient and able to work with little oversight. The bulk of the docket is criminal. Other common types of cases include insurance, contract and occasional corporate ones. Justice Jacobs is retiring.

DELAWARE SUPERIOR COURT

The Delaware Superior Court is the state trial level court for Delaware, handling both civil and criminal matters. As noted on the [court's website](#), the Delaware Superior Court is the top ranked state trial court in the nation in the State Liability Systems Ranking Study. There are 21 judges located in Delaware's three counties. The court also acts as an appellate court for appeals from various state agencies (i.e. workers compensation, unemployment compensation, zoning etc.) and from the Court of Common Pleas, a court of limited jurisdiction.

The Superior Court's judicial clerkship term runs from September 1 to August 31 each year. The court has a centralized clerkship application process:

Eligible applicants interested in a clerkship in New Castle County should submit a resume, writing sample, transcript, and two letters of recommendation to:

**The Honorable Paul R. Wallace
Superior Court Judges' Chambers
New Castle County Courthouse
500 North King Street, Suite 10400
Wilmington, DE 19801-3733**

Those interested in a clerkship in Kent County should send a resume, writing sample and transcript to:

**The Honorable William L. Witham Jr.
Superior Court Judges' Chambers
Kent County Courthouse
38 The Green
Dover, DE 19901**

Eligible students interested in a clerkship in Sussex County should submit a resume, writing sample and transcript to:

The Honorable T. Henley Graves
Superior Court Judges' Chambers
Sussex County Courthouse
1 The Circle, Suite 2
Georgetown, DE 19947

Here is some specific information from some of the judges (this information has not been updated since 2013 so it could be outdated):

Judge Witham hires from October 1 through November 30 in the 3L year. He prefers applicants who are from and plan to practice in Delaware and requires that applicants have taken torts, civil and criminal procedure and constitutional law. His docket is 70% criminal cases and 30% civil.

Judge William Carpenter interviews from September to November of the 3L year and is finished by Thanksgiving. He does not require any ties to Delaware. Having good grades in evidence, criminal procedure and civil procedure are pluses. He handles both criminal and civil cases and is also assigned to the court's complex commercial litigation section. He prefers that applicants send applications directly to him and not rely on the centralized application system.

Judge Richard R. Cooch usually hires in the fall of the 3L year and has no other specific requirements.

Judge Eric Davis hires from August through early October in the 3L year. He does not have a preference regarding Delaware ties or intent to practice in Delaware. Most research done by his clerk is of a civil nature although 50% of the judge's docket is criminal.

Judge Henley Graves hires in the fall of the 3L year. He looks for candidates who intend to practice in Delaware. Intending to practice in Sussex County is a plus. He looks for evidence of a strong work ethic.

Judge Andrea Rocanelli is new to the bench and has hired only one clerk who interned for her the previous summer. She intends to hire in the late summer/early fall of the 3L year. Intent to practice or at least open to the idea of practicing in DE a plus but not a requirement.

Judge Paul Wallace hires the summer before the 3L year. He requests a resume, two writing samples and references rather than letters. He strongly prefers applicants who intend to practice in Delaware. He likes applicants that have had some advanced writing experience such as appellate advocacy or a journal experience. He also likes to see some public service experience.

DELAWARE FAMILY COURT

The Delaware Family Court handles all types of cases involving children.

New Castle County Judges – have a centralized hiring system. There are 10 judges. Eight of the judges each have a clerk but partner with another judge and his/her clerk so two judges share two clerks. The last two judges currently share one clerk but hope to get approval to hire a second clerk soon. The judges typically hire students right out of school. They begin accepting applications in early summer before the 3L year, start interviewing in mid-September and are usually finished hiring by late October/early November. The clerkship term is from September 1 through August 31. Most of the judges do not require and DE ties or intent to practice in

Delaware although a couple do favor those who do have ties. Some course work, clinic or volunteer experience involving family law is a plus but not a requirement. Two of the judges participate in the GPALS job fair in Philadelphia each year.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS

This is the highest court in the District of Columbia, there is no intermediate appellate court. The court currently consists of nine active judges (including one Chief Judge) and 12 senior judges. There are two types of clerks, Judicial Clerks and Court Clerks (who serve all the judges). For the Judicial Clerks, each of the judges hires two law clerks, except for the senior judges who share clerks.

Most of the judges hire 3Ls directly from law school, but in recent years several judges have hired law clerks with one or two years of experience. The clerkships are typically for a one-year term. While some judges are posting positions in early spring of the 2L year, most appellate judges tend to hire in July and August. Students should follow up directly with the court to see if there are any openings after the fall hiring season.

For Court Clerks, applicants need only send one application to Staff Counsel Rosanna M. Mason. E-mail: rmason@dcca.state.dc.us, (202) 879-2718, Fax: (202) 626-8840 at the courthouse, and the deadline is typically in early December of students' third year.

SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The Superior Court handles all local trial matters, including civil, criminal, family court, probate, tax, landlord-tenant, small claims, and traffic. The court consists of a chief judge and 61 associate judges. The court is assisted by the service of 24 magistrate judges as well as retired judges who have been recommended and approved as senior judges. Each associate judge hires one law clerk, and the magistrate judges typically share clerks. Students should apply individually to each associate judge and magistrate judge. The Senior Judges on each floor share clerks, the judges are on the 3rd and 5th floor and students can send applications to "Senior Judges, x floor" For more Information, they can contact April Whitaker at 202 879 4816 (3rd Floor) and Anna Scanlon at 202 879 1172 (5th Floor).

The judges are organized into divisions (Family, Civil, Criminal, Probate & Tax, and Domestic Violence) and then assignments within those divisions. The assignments are updated yearly in January, but judges typically stay at least two to three years in any particular division before rotating to another one.

The associate judges typically hire graduating 3Ls for one year terms. Some judges have hired more experienced attorneys who serve for longer than one year, and judges are usually flexible

if clerks would like to stay for longer than a year. Some judges hire in September/October of students' third year of law school, some wait until November/December, and some make decisions in January/February. By March, most of the judges have hired, but a few may still be accepting applications. Students can submit applications to all judges as early as September, but may need to follow up with judges in January if they still have not heard.

Most judges request a cover letter, resume, law school transcript, writing sample, and at least two letters of recommendation. Letters of recommendation are often optional, and applicants can submit a list of references instead. Cover letters should highlight the applicants' relevant experience and background.

FLORIDA

FLORIDA SUPREME COURT

Seven justices make up the Florida Supreme Court, which is located in Tallahassee. The Chief Justice oversees the entire State Courts System. Opportunities to clerk exist with the individual justices, as well as with the Central Staff Office and Clerk's Office. Most justices have at least one term clerk. Term clerks are typically hired for a two year term. Vacancies are usually posted on the Florida Supreme Court's employment page available at <http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/employment/index.shtml>.

While the justices' application timelines vary, in order to maximize consideration it is best to apply during the summer after the second year of law school, as soon as possible after receiving second year grades and class rank. Most justices request a cover letter, resume, self-edited writing sample, law school and undergraduate transcripts and letters of recommendation (or list of references). The primary selection criteria tend to be class rank, law review membership, and writing and research experience. Several of the justices require that their clerks sit for the Florida bar exam.

FLORIDA DISTRICT COURTS OF APPEAL

Florida's intermediate courts of appeal are known as the "district" courts of appeal. There are five such districts that are headquartered in Tallahassee (First DCA), Lakeland (Second DCA), Miami (Third DCA), West Palm Beach (Fourth DCA), and Daytona Beach (Fifth DCA).

A fair number of Florida DCA judges employ career clerks exclusively. However, there are many judges who also hire term clerks for one to two year terms. The Fourth and Fifth DCAs tend to do the most hiring of term clerks. Those interested in a clerkship position with a DCA judge should address their inquiries to the individual judges. Vacancies occur at various times in each chambers, but most new term clerks typically begin in August of each year. While many judges who hire term law clerks tend to hire during students' third year of law school, it is advisable to send applications during the summer after the second year of law school, once second year grades and ranks are available.

Florida DCAs also have central staff attorney offices that employ judicial law clerks. Staff attorney office clerkships are not “elbow clerkships.” Rather, DCA staff attorneys serve all of the judges on the DCA and report to the Chief DCA judge. Many of the DCAs treat these as one or two year term positions. These positions are sometimes posted on the DCAs’ websites. However, because not all DCAs post their staff attorney positions online, those interested in working as a staff attorney can send the DCA Deputy Marshall an application and ask that it be held on file until a position becomes available.

A comprehensive list of all of the circuit courts’ websites is available at: <http://www.flcourts.org/courts/dca/dca.shtml>. Because Florida DCA judges do not always post their vacancies online, as stated above, interested applicants should contact judges’ chambers directly to ascertain the hiring needs.

FLORIDA CIRCUIT AND COUNTY COURTS

In Florida, trials are conducted in “circuit” or “county” courts, depending upon the type of case and/or amount in controversy. Individual circuit and county court judges in Florida do not employ law clerks. Rather, each of the 20 circuits in Florida has a staff attorney’s office which serves all of the judges within the circuit. These positions are referred to as Trial Court Law Clerks. The vast majority of these positions are permanent positions. Vacancies are usually posted on the circuit court’s website (though not always for very long). A comprehensive list of all of the circuit courts’ websites is available at: <http://www.flcourts.org/florida-courts/trial-courts-circuit.shtml>. An exception to this is the 15th Judicial Circuit in West Palm Beach, which treats law clerk positions as two year term positions. Vacancies at the 15th Judicial Circuit are usually posted on the court’s website in late January/early February at: <https://www.15thcircuit.com/law-clerks>.

* * *

Individuals interested in clerking for any court in Florida can also post their materials on the Florida State Courts Law Clerk Resume Repository, available at <http://lawclerk.flcourts.org>. However, because it’s unclear how many judges use the Repository to identify law clerk candidates, applicants are advised to use that method in addition to submitting applications to the individual justices’/judges’ chambers.

GEORGIA

GEORGIA SUPREME COURT AND GEORGIA APPELLATE COURT

The Georgia General Assembly recently (2018) appropriated funds for each of the nine (9) Justices of the Georgia Supreme Court to hire an additional law clerk for a one year term. All other law clerks for the Supreme Court are career staff attorneys or law clerks. In summer 2018,

the justices began accepting applications for one-year clerkships to begin in summer 2018 and summer 2019, suggesting that the justices will hire approximately one year before the term start date going forward. Qualifications are that applicants must be admitted to the State Bar of Georgia within one year of employment (meaning 3Ls and rising 3Ls may apply). Applicants should also have outstanding academic performance in law school and undergraduate studies, demonstrated proficiency in writing and legal analysis, and great integrity and character. The salary for the new term clerkships will be \$85,737.

To apply, send an e-mail to: resume@gasupreme.us. In the subject line of the e-mail, identify the year for which you are applying for a clerkship, as well as the Justice to whom you are applying (*example – Law Clerk for 2018 – Chief Justice Hines*). Attach the following materials to the e-mail as **separate PDF** files: (1) cover letter, including a statement of interest; (2) resume, including your grade point average and class rank in law school and undergraduate studies; (3) a law school transcript; (4) a writing sample (not heavily edited by others); and (5) a **list** of three references (judges, lawyers, or law professors). The chambers of individual Justices will contact select applicants to schedule interviews.

The judges at the Georgia Court of Appeals courts continue to have career staff attorneys/law clerks. The judges on each court require applicants to have some practical legal experience prior to serving as staff attorneys or law clerks. Applicants must be admitted to the Georgia state bar prior to submitting their applications.

While vacancies don't happen with regularity, it is important when positions are available for applicants to demonstrate a connection to the state and/or a concrete reason for their interest in working in Georgia. Being able to show that connection through a resume and/or a cover letter is critical. It is not enough to be able to speak to the connection during the interview process.

Applicants should give careful consideration to what they submit as a writing sample. Judges on the two appellate courts tend to prefer a more practical writing sample over more academic pieces. Applicants should be encouraged to select a writing sample that they have drafted from their prior legal experience (a brief, etc.) rather than a publication style piece (note, article, etc.).

Applicants interested in either the Georgia Supreme Court or Court of Appeals should note that the courts have a central staff attorney pool in addition to those staff attorneys hired by individual judges. These staff attorneys work for the court as a whole, but offer another viable opportunity to secure a clerkship position as judges often hire permanent clerks from this pool of experienced attorneys.

GEORGIA SUPERIOR COURT

Many of the judges on the Superior Court level share law clerks with the judicial circuit, meaning that one clerk will likely work with a few judges simultaneously during their clerkship. While the hiring is done on a very ad hoc basis, interested applicants must begin regularly checking the

court's website at www.georgiacourts.org/courts for position openings early in the spring of their second year (or third year for students in part-time/four-year programs). When posting their clerkship openings, judges will often post well in advance.

These clerkships are traditional one-year or two-year positions. It is, however, important to note that not all clerks are hired directly by an individual judge. In some circuits (generally smaller circuits), clerks are hired by the superior court to serve all judges sitting within that circuit.

Applicants should be sure to highlight their connections (if any) to the area in which they are applying for a clerkship. This is particularly important for applicants whose resumes may not readily demonstrate their connection to the state of Georgia. Judges want to know that the applicant has a well-thought out reason for applying and/or a connection to the area.

Note: Georgia also has clerkship opportunities at its State Courts in larger metropolitan areas. These courts are county level courts with jurisdiction over misdemeanor criminal cases and unlimited jurisdiction over civil matters. Applicants interested in these opportunities should apply directly to the individual judges and should be encouraged to apply broadly in order to secure a clerkship position. Contact information can be found at the same website as for Superior Courts: www.georgiacourts.org/courts. Most often, smaller courts such as probate, juvenile, or municipal courts do not hire law clerks.

ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court Justices almost universally have career law clerks. Applicants interested in securing a clerkship should have a demonstrated connection to the area as well as some practical post-graduate legal experience. It seems as though some justices consistently hire from particular law schools.

ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT

The Appellate Court is divided into Districts. Generally, there are no term clerk positions as most judges have career clerks. These judges seem to prefer applicants with some post-graduate legal experience over recent graduates. Increasingly, there seems to be a trend to hire law clerks that have served (or are currently serving) on the court as Staff Attorneys. Applicants should do a bit of research - beyond mere geography - before applying to any particular appellate district. The first and second appellate districts tend to be the most active districts and engage staff attorneys in more matters. This additional experience can be helpful to the candidate who ultimately wants to transition into a law clerk position on the court.

ILLINOIS CIRCUIT COURT

The Circuit Courts encourage applicants to check with individual judges regarding their clerkship requirements. It seems, however, that the only Circuit that hires with any regularity is Cook County. The individual judges in Cook County will consider recent law school graduates for clerkships usually for two years. Applicants should demonstrate their connection to the area in their cover letter and/or resume.

INDIANA

SUPREME COURT

The Indiana Supreme Court consists of a Chief Justice and four Associate Justices. A Justice of the Supreme Court is appointed by the Governor following a recruitment and interviewing process with a seven-member Judicial Nominating Commission and serves as a Supreme Court Justice for a minimum of two years before being subject to a retention vote at a General Election. If approved, the Justice of the Supreme Court begins a 10-year term, and is subject to a retention vote every ten years. Retirement is required at the age of 75. The Chief Justice is selected by the Judicial Nominating Commission from among the five justices on the Indiana Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has opportunities for law clerks to work directly with the five Justices of the Supreme Court. Each Justice of the Supreme Court makes his or her own decision on hiring clerks and determines what tasks to assign to his or her clerk. Openings for clerkships are listed at the clerkship section of the Indiana Courts website (<https://www.in.gov/judiciary/supreme/2362.htm>). Salaries range from \$67,500 to \$75,500 depending on experience, and law clerks receive benefits similar to all state employees.

COURT OF APPEALS

The Indiana Court of Appeals is comprised of five districts. Three judges are assigned to each district, for a total of 15 Indiana Court of Appeals judges. The Court hears cases in panels of three judges only. All panels have statewide jurisdiction, except in death penalty or life-without-parole cases, cases in which a statute is declared unconstitutional by trial court, and attorney disciplinary cases. All those cases are directly appealed to the Indiana Supreme Court. Tax cases are appealed to the Indiana Tax Court (see below). The three-judge panels rotate three times per year. Indiana Court of Appeals judges are recruited and interviewed by a seven-member Judicial Nomination Commission and appointed by the Governor. The judges serve for a minimum of two years before being subject to a retention vote at general election every 10 years.

Hiring practices vary for each judge. Each judge makes his or her own decision about how and when to hire law clerks. Some judges publish on the general "Employment Opportunities" link on the Indiana Judicial Branch website (<http://www.in.gov/judiciary/2621.htm>) but not all. It is best to determine clerkship openings by contacting the judge's chambers directly. Law clerk salaries at the Indiana Court of Appeals start at \$65,119 per year and state of Indiana benefits

apply. Information about the Indiana Court of Appeals is found at the Indiana Court website (<http://www.in.gov/judiciary/appeals/index.htm>).

TRIAL LEVEL

Indiana Trial Courts are organized by county . There are 47 city courts and 28 town courts, created by local ordinance. There are 92 counties, 91 circuit courts (2 counties combined) with general trial jurisdiction and appellate jurisdiction over city and town courts. There are additional superior courts which generally have general jurisdiction and small claim and minor offense divisions as well as appellate jurisdiction over city and town courts. The hiring of law clerks is controlled individually by each county; therefore, the availability of clerkships varies widely. Information about the Indiana Trial Courts is found at the Indiana Court website (<http://www.in.gov/judiciary/2794.htm>). Interested applicants should contact the specific court to inquire into the hiring process and availability of clerkships for that specific county. The website has a directory of Courts and Clerks in Indiana.

TAX COURT

Pursuant to Indiana Constitution Article 7, Section 1, the General Assembly established the Indiana Tax Court effective July 1, 1986. The Tax Court hears certain cases as the finder of fact, similar to a trial court and certain other cases as a reviewing court, similar to the Indiana Court of Appeals. The Tax Court has one judge who is appointed by the Governor, after a recruitment and interview process with a seven-member Judicial Nominating Commission. The initial term of the Judge is until the general election following the expiration of two years from the initial appointment. The Judge is subject to a retention vote every ten years in the same manner as the Indiana Court of Appeals judges and Indiana Supreme Court Justices.

The Indiana Tax Court hires law clerks to work directly with the Tax Court judge. The law clerks work individually, as a team with fellow clerks, and directly with the Judge. First year law clerks receive an annual salary of approximately \$66,000 and benefits similar to all state employees, and the clerkship is typically one year in length, but a second year can occur. Openings are listed at the Indiana Court website (<https://www.in.gov/judiciary/tax/2372.htm>).

IOWA

SUPREME COURT

Traditionally, each of the seven justices on the Iowa Supreme Court and each of the nine judges on the Iowa Court of Appeals employs a law clerk. The clerks' duties typically include conducting legal research, drafting memoranda, preparing summaries, and reviewing opinions to assist the justice or judge with the disposition of cases.

The eight judicial districts (trial courts) also employ law clerks to assist trial judges. Law clerk duties at the district level may vary from district to district, but generally include legal research and writing.

Work locations of Iowa Supreme Court law clerks are usually split between the courthouse in the justice's home county and the Judicial Branch Building in Des Moines. Law clerks for the Iowa Court of Appeals work at the Judicial Branch Building in Des Moines. Locations vary across the state for district court law clerks.

Law clerks must be law school graduates. Employment is usually for a one-year period, beginning in August. At a judge's discretion, clerks may be offered the opportunity to continue employment for another year or so. Law clerks are eligible for a full range of benefits including health and dental insurance, disability and life insurance, 11 holidays and two weeks vacation.

Application deadlines vary, but applications for positions start arriving as early as spring of the year prior to commencement of employment. Application criteria vary somewhat according to the individual preferences of the judge or justice. In general, strong writing ability, GPA, class standing, and law review experience are important.

Each justice and judges sets his or her own interviewing schedule. Applications should include a resume and cover letter. Some justices or judges may request a law school transcript, recent writing sample and references. Address and send applications to individual justices or judges in care of:

Iowa Supreme Court
Judicial Branch Building
1111 E. Court Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319

Iowa Court of Appeals
Judicial Branch Building
Attention: Dan Marvin
1111 E. Court Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319

Mr. Marvin will make the applications available to judges seeking to fill clerk positions.

DISTRICT COURT

Send resume and cover letter to District Court Administrators as directed in the Vermont Law School guide.

MARYLAND

The www.courts.state.md.us website is helpful for biographies of judges, links to county court websites, information about judicial nominations, and job postings other than clerkships in the court system.

COURT OF APPEALS

This is the state's high court. There are seven judges on this court. Each judge has two term clerks. Some judges opt not to have a judicial assistant and instead have a third clerk who sometimes is a term clerk and, other times, is a career clerk. The judges' chambers are located

throughout the state of Maryland. Oral arguments occur in Annapolis, Maryland, where a number (but not all!) of the appellate judges are located.

Each judge determines his or her own hiring timeline and application requirements. Typically, though, the judges begin accepting applications in late December/early January of the second year of law school. All the judges usually are finished hiring by the end of the spring semester of the second year. It is best to call each judge to determine the application requirements because there are slight variations between the judges. Contact information is available on the Maryland Judiciary website.

COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS

This is the intermediate appellate court that hears both criminal and civil appeals as a matter of right. It is often referred to as the “workhorse court” of the appellate courts because the volume of cases is so great here. There are fifteen judges on this court. Like the Court of Appeals judges, each judge on this court is budgeted two law clerks. Most judges choose to have two term clerks. Some judges, however, choose to have one permanent clerk and one term clerk. Still, others choose not to have a judicial assistant and have a career clerk and two term clerks. Also, like the Court of Appeals, the judges’ chambers are located throughout the state of Maryland, with oral arguments occurring in Annapolis, Maryland.

Each judge determines his or her own hiring timeline and application requirements. An increasing number of Court of Special Appeals judges are accepting applications, conducting interviews, and making offers starting in the middle of the spring semester of the second year of law school. There are a few judges, though, who may accept applications sooner, but will not conduct interviews or make offers until late summer (August) or fall (one typically hires in December) of the third-year of law school. Like the Court of Appeals, it is best to call each judge regarding application materials and exact timing because they do vary between the judges.

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES

Circuit Courts are where jury trials are held. Circuit Courts generally handle more serious criminal cases and major civil cases. These include juvenile and other family law cases such as divorce, custody and child support. The Circuit Courts hear most cases appealed from the District Court, orphans’ courts and some administrative agencies. Circuit Courts also hear domestic violence cases. Cases may be decided by juries, but also may be decided by a judge only.

There is a Circuit Court and Clerk's Office in each of Maryland’s 23 counties and the city of Baltimore. Circuit Courts are grouped in 8 judicial circuits.

In most counties, the judges do their interviewing and hiring individually, so students need to call each chambers and ask for application information and deadlines. An increasing number judges look at applications as early as the summer before third year. Many begin receiving the bulk of their applications in September and make a decision between October and December.

Then, there are some who do not hire until the winter or spring. It is always helpful to apply early, as these application deadlines are rolling, and judges can make decisions at any time.

In smaller counties, usually those judges hire individually, too; however, there are a few counties where they accept applications as a group through the chief administrative judge; in past years, Wicomico and Harford counties operated in this way. While the law clerks work for individual judges, the hiring process is streamlined, and applicants send applications to the administrative judge. In Baltimore City, the Retired and Visiting Judges share a law clerk, so applicants apply to them as a whole.

In some of the larger counties, judges are assigned to specific dockets for a period of time. In the smaller counties, they may hear a variety of cases. To find out a judge's docket for your clerkship year, you can call the chambers to ask or ask a judge during the interview. The Circuit Court for Baltimore City posts the docket rotation on its website. Also, there are specialized dockets, such as the Business and Technology Docket or a Drug Treatment Court, so students could investigate those areas of interest.

CIRCUIT COURT MASTERS

Masters also hire law clerks. In Baltimore City, individual masters have law clerks. The General Master's Office in the city hires staff attorneys from time to time when there are available positions. It is best to call each master's chambers directly to find out application information.

ORPHANS' COURTS

In Baltimore City, the Orphans' Court judges hire and share a law clerk. Baltimore County, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County Orphans' Courts hire clerks, so applicants should call to find out specific information.

DISTRICT COURTS

Some of the district courts hire law clerks. Applicants should call those courts in the fall for application information. Hiring decisions could be made in the fall and winter. Send applications to the chief administrative judge for each district court, because that judge is the point of contact for the hiring process. Those clerks work for more than one judge at a time, and some of the larger counties hire two clerks. The state Administrative Office of the Courts in Annapolis can inform applicants what information to send to the various district courts and by when. A list of the judges is on the Maryland court website.

MASSACHUSETTS

MASSACHUSETTS SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT

The SJC is the Commonwealth's highest appellate court. The Court consists of a Chief Justice and

six Associate Justices. Each SJC Justice has two law clerks. Most law clerks spend one year at the SJC, but occasionally clerks will stay for two years, and there are a few career clerks as well. Whether a law clerk stays for more than one year is up to the clerk and individual justice.

The SJC generally begins to accept clerkship applications in late August or early September. Candidates are encouraged to apply as early as possible, since the Justices make offers on a rolling basis, generally by mid-September. Exact dates and deadlines can be found on the SJC's website, <http://www.mass.gov/courts/sjc/>, and are usually posted in the spring.

Each candidate must submit a single application in paper form: (1) a current resume; (2) an official law school transcript; (3) a writing sample not to exceed ten pages and not edited by another; and (4) two letters of recommendation from law school faculty members. Cover letters should be addressed to "The Justices," although applicants may indicate a preference for clerking for a specific justice or justices. The candidate should arrange to have the law school send an official transcript directly to the Hiring Coordinator, however, the applicant may submit an unofficial transcript with the resume and writing sample. Letters of recommendation may be sent after the candidate's initial submission of materials, but the candidate might not be considered until the letters are received.

Applications are reviewed in their totality, however, academic excellence at the law school one attends is a significant factor among successful candidates. Interviews are scheduled at the request of individual justices. Candidates interview with an individual justice in-person, and sometimes current clerks meet with the candidates as well.

Most law clerks are hired straight out of law school, but the SJC also hires individuals who have been out of law school for a few years. Most SJC law clerks sit for the Massachusetts Bar Exam in July, however, sitting for the bar and passing the bar is not a requirement for the position. The Court informally cautions law clerks against sitting for the bar exam in February while serving as a law clerk.

MASSACHUSETTS APPEALS COURT

The Massachusetts Appeals Court is a court of general appellate jurisdiction, with a large caseload in both criminal and civil matters. It currently comprises a Chief Justice and 24 associate justices. From time to time, retired appellate justices also serve. The Chief Justice has two law clerks; the other justices have one. Generally, the Court hires approximately 30 law clerks for a year. Several law clerks stay on for more than one year, and a few have stayed on indefinitely as career law clerks.

The court has a centralized application process. Persons interested in law clerkships apply by mailing or emailing one set of materials, which include a cover letter, resume, copy of a law school transcript, a completed online application for employment, and two or more letters of recommendation (employer recommendations are recommended; letters should be addressed to Managing Attorney Frank Mockler, and they may be sent separately). Candidates should

include their e-mail address with their application. Application materials can be mailed or emailed (frank.mockler@appct.state.ma.us) between mid-August and late September (exact dates are posted on the website, <http://www.mass.gov/courts/appealscourt/>, sometime in the spring).

Applicants should demonstrate superior academic achievement, an ability to work professionally and independently, and an interest in legal research and writing.

Interviews are conducted on a rolling basis in September and October, and final selections are usually made in November. Screening interviews are with the Court's Managing Attorney, Frank Mockler, and applicants should be prepared to articulate why they are interested in clerking for the Appeals Court.

The majority of law clerks are hired directly out of law school, although in the last couple of years, about five out of 28 were recent graduates and lawyers. There is no requirement that law clerks take (or pass) any bar exam. However, the Appeals Court encourages law clerks to take a bar exam the summer after graduation so that they do not have to study and take the exam while balancing clerkship duties.

MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURTS

The Trial Courts are comprised of the following Court Departments: Boston Municipal, District Court, Housing Court, Juvenile Court, Land Court, Probate & Family Court, and Superior Court.

A hiring freeze that has been in effect since 2009 has limited the Trial Courts' ability to accept applications for judicial law clerk positions. However, a small number of judicial clerks have been hired in the fall of the last two years.

MICHIGAN

SUPREME COURT

The Michigan Supreme Court consists of seven justices who are nominated by political parties but elected in nonpartisan elections for eight-year terms. The Supreme Court has discretionary review of cases from the Michigan Court of Appeals and other state courts. The Supreme Court sits in Lansing, although a few Justices maintain a chambers in Detroit.

Each justice has four clerks. The justices can choose whether they want to hire term clerks, career clerks, or a mix of both. If they have term clerks, they can also choose the term length for their clerks; terms are most commonly one or two years, but some justices have three-year terms for their clerks. The employment section of the Michigan Courts website (<http://www.courts.michigan.gov/>) perpetually advertises that candidates interested in clerking for a justice may submit materials directly to the justice at any time of year. Some justices also post their own job postings on the employment page when they are ready to receive

applications. In the past, the justices primarily reviewed applications and hired in early to late summer for the next year, but several justices (in particular, Justices McCormack, Viviano, and Larsen) appear to be moving more quickly in response to the earlier timelines of many federal judges. It is advised that applicants interested in clerking for a Michigan Supreme Court justice for a specific term call chambers directly to ascertain the needs of the justices. Openings for career clerk positions will be on an as-needed basis and are typically posted on the employment section of the Michigan Courts website. Please note that the perpetual advertisement referenced above does not tell applicants to submit letters of recommendation with their applications, but letters are strongly recommended, if not required, by the justices.

COURT OF APPEALS

The Michigan Court of Appeals is comprised of four districts from which twenty-eight judges are elected in nonpartisan elections for six-year terms. The First District is based in Detroit, the Second District in Troy, the Third District in Grand Rapids, and the Fourth District is in Lansing. There are seven judges assigned to each District, although the judges within each District do not necessarily have their “home” chambers in the exact city where their District is based; hence there are Court of Appeals judges with chambers throughout the State. The Court sits in panels of three judges each.

Each judge has a law clerk and a judicial assistant. The vast, vast majority of law clerks who work directly for individual Court of Appeals judges (i.e., “elbow clerks”) are career clerks. When there are “elbow clerk” vacancies, they are typically filled by attorneys that the judges know via their work with the Research Division (see below). As such, it is relatively rare to see a posting for an elbow clerk position with an individual Michigan Court of Appeals judge. However, postings for elbow clerk positions with Court of Appeals judges are found on the employment section of the Michigan Courts website (<http://www.courts.michigan.gov/>) or on the employment section of the Michigan Court of Appeals website: (<http://coa.courts.mi.gov/resources/employment.htm>) on an as-needed basis.

In addition, the Michigan Court of Appeals has a Research Division, which has offices in Lansing, Detroit, and Grand Rapids. The Research Division typically hires in the fall of a student’s third year of law school for a two-year term that begins the fall following law school graduation. The Research Division recruits on campus at some Michigan law schools during the fall recruiting season. Interested applicants from other schools should send their materials directly to the Research Division.

TRIAL LEVEL COURTS

Michigan trial level courts include circuit, district, and probate courts, as well as some specialty courts such as the Court of Claims, the Michigan Tax Tribunal, and other administrative law tribunals. The number of law clerks varies widely among the trial courts – some busy trial level courts employ many and others lack funding to hire any. For courts with clerks, the judges and/or local governing bodies of the specific courts determine whether the positions are term or

career positions, and this can change year by year. As such, the availability of clerkships at the trial level in Michigan state courts varies widely. Applicants interested in clerking at the trial court level in Michigan should contact the specific court(s) of interest to inquire if and when they are hiring clerks for the relevant term. The Michigan Courts website has a helpful directory of Michigan trial courts: <http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/services/dirs/trialdir.htm> The trial level courts that routinely hire term clerks typically post positions in the spring for positions to begin that same fall. Postings are often found on the employment section of the Michigan Courts website (<http://www.courts.michigan.gov/>) or sent directly to the career planning offices of local law schools.

MINNESOTA

MINNESOTA SUPREME COURT

The Minnesota Supreme Court consists of seven Justices, who hire collectively each year using a pool system one year prior to clerkship start date.

The Chief Justice hires two clerks, and each Associate Justice hires one chambers clerk. Additionally, the Court hires two shared clerk positions where clerks split their work among three justices respectively. The term for a Supreme Court clerk is one year.

The application for the Minnesota Supreme Court opens in January for a term start date of the following summer. Applicants apply online at www.mncourts.gov. Required application materials include resume, cover letter, letters of recommendation, class rank (if ranked by law school), and law school transcript. Additionally, applicants are required to complete a 20 – 25 short answer questionnaire, which is attached to their online application. Interviews are held in late spring or early summer.

MINNESOTA COURT OF APPEALS

The Minnesota Court of Appeals also hires using a pool method, and opens its application cycle in spring each year. Some judges hire outside the pool method via direct application after all pool clerks are hired. The application deadline is mid-summer. Interviews for the court occur in early September each year, with a term start date of the following summer. In the past, students have been able to apply to both the Minnesota Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals using one application online at www.mncourts.gov, but it now appears that the hiring process has been bifurcated.

Required application materials include resume, cover letter, letters of recommendation, class rank (if ranked by law school), and law school transcript. Additionally, applicants are required to complete a 20 – 25 short answer questionnaire, which is attached to their online application.

MINNESOTA TRIAL COURTS

All Minnesota trial court judges hire via www.mncourts.gov as needed year round. Generally, judges expect a clerk to start after the hiring process and do not consider 3Ls until late spring of their 3L year. The term for a trial court clerk is at least one year, with some judges preferring longer and some clerks staying beyond the year. Required application materials differ for each judge.

MISSOURI

SUPREME COURT

The Missouri Supreme Court consists of a Chief Justice and six judges. Pursuant to the state's constitution, the only judge in Missouri who is referred to as a "justice" is the chief justice of the Supreme Court. Other judges are referred to as "judge." By tradition, the chief justice typically is elected on a rotating basis by a vote of all seven Supreme Court judges to a two-year term. Selection of Supreme Court judges is governed by the merit-based Missouri nonpartisan court plan. Pursuant to article V, section 19 of the Missouri constitution, the regular term of a Supreme Court judge is 12 years, and a judge may seek to serve for multiple terms. All judges must retire at the age of 70, although if they wish, they can apply for senior status, which permits them to continue hearing cases on a limited basis.

The Supreme Court sits in the state capitol, Jefferson City, Missouri. While many of the judges live in their hometowns throughout the state and only travel to Jefferson City for court, most of these judges will have their clerks work in the courthouse in Jefferson City. Each judge has at least two clerks.

Presently, two of the judges have permanent/career clerks, and one has one career clerk and one term clerk. The remaining four judges hire term clerks for one-year terms, with one of those judges hiring for rotating two-year terms.

Most of the judges hire between May and September after the 2L year. If interested in this court, be sure to refer to the court's website for hiring information and specific application requirements. <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=36777>. Because there is no guarantee that all openings will be posted on the court's website, it is best to confirm hiring plans with the judges' chambers directly.

COURT OF APPEALS

The judges of the Missouri Court of Appeals review the decisions made by the trial courts and certain administrative agencies. They have jurisdiction over most appeals. Typically, the judges sit in panels of three, although occasionally all the judges of one of the districts of the Court of Appeals might sit en banc. Selection of Court of Appeals judges is governed by the merit-based Missouri nonpartisan court plan. Pursuant to article V, section 19 of the Missouri constitution, the regular term of a Supreme Court judge is 12 years, and a judge may seek to serve for

multiple terms. All judges must retire at the age of 70, although if they wish, they can apply for senior status, which permits them to continue hearing cases on a limited basis.

The judges of the Court of Appeals are divided into three geographic areas. There are judges in the Eastern District, based in St. Louis; in the Western District, based in Kansas City; and in the Southern District, based in Springfield.

Hiring practices vary for each district. Most of the judges on the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Eastern District have two clerks. Over two-thirds of the judges have permanent/career clerks. More recently appointed judges have returned to hiring term clerks. Most terms are for one year (there are a couple who hire rotating two-year term clerks), however the judges have been known to extend the terms depending on the circumstances. Judges in this district hire as early as the summer after 2L year (4 semesters of grades), and as late as spring of the 3L year. Occasionally openings are posted on the court website at <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=1180> It is always best to confirm hiring plans with the judges' chambers directly.

Most of the judges on the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Western District have two clerks. Many are permanent/career clerks, but some judges hire a term clerk as well. Terms are typically for one-year, but can sometimes be extended depending on the circumstances. Judges in this district hire as early as the summer after 2L year (4 semesters of grades), and as late as spring of the 3L year. Occasionally openings are posted on the court website at <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=1180>. It is always best to confirm hiring plans with the judges' chambers directly.

The judges on the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Southern District have one permanent/career law clerk that works with them in chambers. The court as a whole also hires two rotating clerks for one-year terms. Sometimes these rotating positions may be extended to two-year terms depending on the circumstances. The rotating clerks work with one judge for three months at a time, and then rotate to a different judge on the court. Because the rotating clerkships can open at any time, those interested in these clerkships should submit their applications to be held on file, even if a position is not currently posted on the court's website at <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=1180>. Applications for rotating clerkships should be sent to the Clerk of the Court, Sandra L. Skinner, John Q. Hammons Building, 300 Hammons Parkway, Springfield, MO 65806. When a judge is in need of replacing a permanent/career clerk in their chambers, they have been known to hire those clerks out of the rotating clerks.

TRIAL LEVEL COURTS

The trial court judges in Missouri typically do not hire term clerks. Some of the circuits have permanent research attorneys that may open from time to time. It is best to check with the court directly about openings and requirements at <http://www.courts.mo.gov>.

NEBRASKA

NEBRASKA SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court is composed of a Chief Justice and six Associate Justices representing the six Judicial Districts of the State. The most common arrangement is for each justice to have one permanent clerk and one term clerk. Term clerks traditionally stay for one or two years although it is not unheard of for a justice to hold onto a clerk for three or even four years depending on individual circumstances. This practice significantly limits the number of clerkships available on a yearly basis. The appellate judges vary in their hiring practices but generally hire somewhere between late summer and October of the 3L year. There is no uniform hiring practice at the appellate level and not all openings will be posted on the Nebraska Judicial Website. The best practice would be to send materials to the judges sometime mid-summer between 2L and 3L years so as not to miss an opportunity. The Fourth Judicial District trial courts will post their position beginning in December of the 3L year and typically hire by February.

NEBRASKA COURT OF APPEALS

The Nebraska Court of Appeals is the state's intermediate appellate court. There are currently six judges, who sit in panels or divisions of three judges each. Each judge traditionally has two clerks with one permanent and the other term. The appellate judges vary in their hiring practices but generally hire somewhere between late summer and October of the 3L year. There is no uniform hiring practice at the appellate level and not all openings will be posted on the Nebraska Judicial Website. The best practice would be to send materials to the judges sometime mid-summer between 2L and 3L years so as not to miss an opportunity. The Fourth Judicial District trial courts will post their position beginning in December of the 3L year and typically hire by February.

NEBRASKA TRIAL COURTS

Nebraska is divided into 12 Judicial Districts encompassing all 93 counties. Only the Fourth Judicial District, based in Omaha, hires a pool of post-graduate judicial clerks each year. The clerks work under the direction of the Deputy Court Administrator, Lead Law Clerk, and the District Court Research Director. The clerks perform legal research for all the district judges of the Fourth Judicial District as well as for the court administrator.

CURRENT HIRING INFORMATION

Nebraska courts are currently under a hiring freeze. Due to current budget constraints judicial clerkship vacancies are not being filled. In the future such positions will be evaluated as they become available and hiring decisions made on a case-by-case basis.

NEVADA SUPREME COURT

NEVADA SUPREME COURT

The Nevada Supreme Court is composed of seven justices, each elected to a six-year term. Applicants may submit a single application which is circulated to all selected justices. The Employment Application is available here <http://www.nevadajudiciary.us/index.php/human-resources>. The application is typically due by June 1 of the preceding year.

Justices Douglas and Pickering are the only Nevada Supreme Court Justices with chambers in Las Vegas. The chambers of all others justices are located in Carson City. Applicants may state a preference for location or specify a particular justice(s) of interest on the Employment Application.

If called for an interview, applicants are required to take a three hour written examination, similar to the Multistate Performance Test (MPT). The results of the examination are analyzed by staff and provided to the justices.

NEVADA DISTRICT COURTS

The Nevada District Courts generally hire between September and April of students' 3L/4LPT year for clerkships beginning in the summer after graduation. However, some judges hire outside of this timeframe.

For the Second Judicial District (Washoe County), students are encouraged to send in applications between September-December of their 3L/4LPT year, and most interviews take place over winter break.

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey is a rich source of judicial clerkships, as each justice and judge hires recent law school graduates, resulting in approximately 480 openings. Although the appellate level clerkships are generally filled early, many trial division judges do not complete their hiring until the spring. To identify the judges who are still hiring in the spring, the best course of action is to call chambers directly. You may also obtain a list of the judges who have not yet hired clerks from the HR office of the judiciary. See the website referenced below for the most up to date contact information. The HR Office updates that list upon receipt of the personnel paperwork from the newly hired clerks. Because of the lag time between the judge's hiring of a clerk, and the paperwork being received in the HR office, the best source of information is to call the judge's chambers directly.

NEW JERSEY SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of the State of New Jersey is an excellent bench, and positions there are highly sought after. Each justice has three clerks, almost all of whom are hired directly out of

law school. Students typically apply around the same time as federal clerkship application cycle. Applications for the Supreme Court should include letters of recommendation, writing sample and transcripts. Justices may inquire as to candidates' connection with New Jersey, but do not have an expectation that they will sit for the New Jersey bar examination.

Although there is a method for centralized applications, as described in the Vermont Law School guide and at www.judiciary.state.nj.us, applicants for Supreme Court clerkships ought to apply directly to each justice.

NEW JERSEY SUPERIOR COURT – APPELLATE DIVISION
Procedures are similar to the New Jersey Supreme Court.

NEW JERSEY SUPERIOR COURT – TRIAL DIVISION

Judges in the NJ trial courts are divided into those hearing civil, criminal, family and equity matters. Candidates should apply directly to the judges in those areas in which they have an interest. Trial courts are divided into vicinages which correspond to a county or counties. Look for the "General Assignment Order" on the New Jersey Judiciary website to identify judges in each location.

NEW JERSEY TAX COURT

New Jersey Tax Court judges sit in throughout the state. Application procedures are similar to that stated above.

NEW YORK

The following summaries are based on information gleaned from public sources, subscription resources, law schools and personal correspondences. Because each individual judge controls hiring in his/her chambers, there may be exceptions to all of these generalizations. So, when in doubt, the best way to learn of a clerkship opening with a particular judge is to call his/her chambers. Judges' phone numbers are listed in the "BNA Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges and Clerks" and the "Leadership Libraries."

When occasional clerkship openings become available, the courts may post those positions via the court-system website. See www.nycourts.gov/careers: Current Opportunities > Jobs Statewide > Legal Titles.

A note on terms used in this summary:

"Elbow" clerks work directly for one judge in his/her chambers. This is distinct from "pool" clerks who work with a group of other clerks for the court as a whole. Different jurisdictions call pool clerks by different names including "Central Research Staff," "Staff Attorneys," or "Court Attorneys."

A "term" clerk works for a judge or group of judges for a specific term (usually one or two

years), while a “permanent” clerk works for as long as they wish, usually many years.

NEW YORK STATE COURT OF APPEALS

Elbow Clerks

Most judges on this court employ one or more elbow clerks. Some will hire clerks to begin directly after law school while others require their clerks to bring workplace experience to chambers. For detailed information on the judges’ current openings and hiring practices, visit <https://www.nycourts.gov/ctapps/clrkships.htm>

Central Legal Research Staff

Each year, the Court of Appeals hires five or six attorneys into two-year clerkships with its Central Legal Research Staff. Central Staff clerks work in Albany and prepare reports on appeals and motions for leave to appeal. Candidates apply between July 1 and September 15 prior to the year that employment is sought. Historically, the starting salary has been over \$76,000 per year plus state employment benefits. Further information is available here: <https://www.nycourts.gov/ctapps/clrkships.htm>

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT, APPELLATE DIVISION, FIRST DEPARTMENT (NEW YORK CITY)

Elbow Clerks

Generally, there are no elbow clerkships available in this Department, as all the judges hire permanent clerks. However, when elbow clerk positions become available, they are posted at www.nycourts.gov/careers.

Central Legal Staff

Open Staff Attorney positions are posted at www.nycourts.gov/careers when available.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT, APPELLATE DIVISION, SECOND DEPARTMENT (BROOKLYN)

Elbow Clerks

As a general rule, there are no elbow clerkship openings in this Department, as judges retain personal law clerks on a permanent basis. Again, however, there are exceptions to this general rule, and candidates should monitor www.nycourts.gov/careers.

Central Legal Staff

Open Staff Attorney positions are posted at www.nycourts.gov/careers when available. Once a position is “open,” obtaining it is a circuitous process. Less than 10% of those who apply are invited to participate in an orientation session and writing test. Those who pass through that screening are interviewed by the Chief Court Attorney and a panel of judges. If they “get the job,” applicants are put on a list of eligible candidates who fill authorized positions.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT, APPELLATE DIVISION, THIRD DEPARTMENT (ALBANY)

Elbow Clerks

As in the other appellate divisions, most judges in this Department retain elbow law clerks on a permanent basis. Watch for occasional openings here: www.nycourts.gov/careers.

Central Legal Staff

The Third Department's Law Research Department hires ten Appellate Court Attorneys to one-year terms. These Attorneys will research and analyze legal questions and issues, prepare preliminary reports and confidential memoranda, check for accuracy of citations, and perform other related duties as directed by the Chief Appellate Court Attorney. Salary ranges from \$68,800 to \$80,850, depending on experience.

The Third Department typically accepts applications between the end of July and the beginning of September. While hard-copy applications are accepted, the court prefers online applications. These positions will be announced here:

<http://www.nycourts.gov/ad3/EmploymentOpportunities.html>.

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURT, APPELLATE DIVISION, FOURTH DEPARTMENT (ROCHESTER)

Elbow Clerks

Here again, elbow clerk positions are few and far between, but when they become available, they are often posted here: www.nycourts.gov/careers.

Central Legal Staff

The Fourth Department regularly hires eight Appellate Court Attorneys for two-year terms. These Attorneys work with all twelve Appellate Justices in the Department. Through researching and writing memoranda, they assist the court in deciding approximately 2000 appeals annually. Starting salary is

\$68,800 in the first year and \$80,850 after admission to the New York Bar.

These positions are announced on the court's website during the late summer:

<http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/ad4/Clerk/Jobs/employment.html>

NEW YORK STATE SUPREME COURTS (TRIAL COURTS)

New York County

Judges in the County typically hire only permanent elbow clerks. When occasional clerkships arise, they are often posted at www.nycourts.gov/careers. In most cases, justices will be seeking to hire clerks who can begin immediately or on a relatively short timeframe. Also note that these postings have short application windows, so check the site with regularity.

Other Counties

Some individual judges and counties may hire term clerks or pool clerks on a term basis. Contact judges' chambers to learn of term clerk openings and contact the Chief Clerks of each Supreme Court to inquire about pool clerk positions.

NORTH CAROLINA

NORTH CAROLINA STATE COURTS

In North Carolina, the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals and the Business Court regularly hire judicial clerks. The Business Court is the only trial court in the state that hires clerks. You should contact the judges /justices chambers to confirm their requirements and deadlines. Hiring is done throughout the school year with each judge / justice determining their requirements with the majority receiving applications during the summer prior to 3L year. The judges on the North Carolina Business Court typically conduct interviews in the fall of students' third year. Each judge / justice typically has two clerks. For additional information, visit <http://www.nccourts.org/>

SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court is the state's highest court. This court has a Chief Justice and six associate justices, who sit as a body and decide cases appealed from lower courts, including from the Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court has no jury, and it makes no determinations of fact; rather, it considers only questions of law, which means resolving a party's claim that there were errors in legal procedures or in judicial interpretation of the law in the trial court or the Court of Appeals. Justice list and biographies available at <http://appellate.nccourts.org/bios/?c=1>

COURT OF APPEALS

The Court of Appeals is an intermediate appellate court that was created to relieve the Supreme Court of a portion of its heavy caseload. It has fifteen judges, who sit in panels of three to hear cases. One of the judges is the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Most of the court's sessions are held in Raleigh, but individual panels sometimes meet in other locations throughout the state. Like the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals decides only questions of law. Judge list and biographies available at <http://appellate.nccourts.org/bios/?c=2>

BUSINESS COURT

The business court is a superior court of special jurisdiction. In 1995, the North Carolina Supreme Court created the business court, in which a designated special superior court judge hears "complex business cases." Reasons that a case might be designated a complex business case include factors like a large number of parties with diverse interests or the involvement of complex legal issues. The designation of a case as a complex business case means that it is assigned to a special superior court judge designated to preside over such cases. That judge generally presides over the entire case from the pretrial matters through the trial. Specialization in business court cases allows the business court judge to develop expertise in both the substantive business law and the case management issues that arise in complex business cases.

There are currently three business court judges, who sit in Charlotte, Greensboro and Raleigh. For more information visit www.ncbusinesscourt.net.

OHIO

OHIO SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of Ohio offers one-three year clerkship opportunities which may begin the summer following graduation from law school. Students interested in a clerkship should be aware of the application deadline which is in the early spring of 2L year. The 2013 salary range is from \$60,444 to \$90,313 depending upon the experience level of the clerk. Candidates interested in clerking for the Supreme Court of Ohio should apply directly to the individual justice(s). Included in the application should be a cover letter, resume, two letters of recommendation, unofficial law school transcript, and a writing sample. More information, such as mailing address and justice bios can be found at: www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/sco/justices/.

OHIO COURT OF APPEALS

There are 12 District Courts within the Ohio Court of Appeals. Students wishing to apply for a clerkship for one of these courts should apply directly to the District Court Administrator for the district in which the student wants to clerk. Salaries vary by District Court. Additional information can be found on the Supreme Court of Ohio website which links to all District Court homepages at: www.sconet.state.oh.us/judsystem/districtcourts/.

OHIO TRIAL COURTS

Ohio trial courts are referred to as Courts of Common Pleas and are organized by county. The following larger counties are more likely to hire law clerks: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery and Summit. Salaries for these clerkships vary by county. Students should apply to the Court Administrator for the county in which they want to clerk. Additional information is available on the Supreme Court of Ohio website which links to all the Courts of Common Pleas homepages, under their county names, at: www.sconet.state.oh.us/web_sites/courts/.

OREGON

OREGON SUPREME COURT

The Oregon Supreme Court consists of seven justices. The court's primary function is discretionary review of decisions of the Oregon Court of Appeals, then direct appeals or reviews in death penalty, lawyer discipline, Oregon Tax Court or certain other cases. The court has original jurisdiction over mandamus, habeas corpus, and other special proceedings.

OREGON COURT OF APPEALS

The Court of Appeals is the first level of appeal following trial and consist of thirteen judges. The court has jurisdiction to hear all civil and criminal appeals from circuit courts, except death penalty cases, and to review most state administrative agency actions. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court appoints the Chief Judge from among the thirteen judges on the Court of Appeals.

OREGON TAX COURT

The Oregon Tax Court consists of one judge and three magistrates. The Tax Court has exclusive jurisdiction over all questions of law or fact arising under the state tax laws.

CLERKSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS

The posting for Oregon Appellate Court Clerkships, which include the Oregon Supreme Court, Oregon Court of Appeals and the Oregon Tax Court open each January, and close each April. The positions begin in August of the following year. Applicants may request to be considered for a specific court, or for as many as are hiring. Historically, interviews occur in June, and hiring offers occur in July. The Oregon Judicial Department's Human Resource Services Division only accepts law clerk applications through state of Oregon's Oregon Job Opportunities page. The job announcement, only available to view while the recruitment is open, explains specific application requirements. Many second-year law students apply, with expectation to begin their clerkship after graduation. Many third-year law students and graduates also apply. The August start date of the following year remains the same. Law clerks must possess a juris doctorate (JD) or equivalent, from an ABA-accredited law school, before their clerkship begins. Many law clerks take a bar examination prior to the start of their clerkship. However, bar membership is not a prerequisite to employment as a law clerk.

PENNSYLVANIA

Almost all judges in Pennsylvania have a career or permanent clerk. Very few hire term clerks.

PENNSYLVANIA SUPREME COURT

At the Supreme Court level, individual justices have chambers in different cities around the state, then travel to hear matters at courthouses in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia. Pennsylvania Supreme Court justices have five to six clerks each. A few of the justices (Castille, Saylor, Eakin, Baer) have two or three of those positions for term clerks, and the rest are career. Some are two year terms and some are one year terms with the possibility of extension. The Supreme Court justices will accept applications in spring of 2L year, through fall of the 3L year, and may call applicants for interviews at any time throughout the fall.

PENNSYLVANIA SUPERIOR COURT, PENNSYLVANIA COMMONWEALTH COURT, PENNSYLVANIA COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

Openings at the intermediate appellate courts and the trial courts are sporadic. When courts or judges have openings, especially in the rural counties, they tend to send vacancy announcements to all Pennsylvania law schools.

The Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Human Resources Office maintains a file of applications for law clerk positions, and judges have been known to review those files when searching for a new law clerk. Applications should be directed to:

Human Resources
First Judicial District
City Hall, Room 668
Philadelphia, PA 19107

RHODE ISLAND

RHODE ISLAND SUPREME COURT

Justices at the Supreme Court all have their own individual application requirements and timelines. Not all of the justices hire law clerks each year. Interested applicants should contact each individual chambers early in the summer prior to graduation in order to determine which justices will be hiring, what their timelines will be for the upcoming hiring cycle and what application materials are required. The best way to find out about the justices' plans for the upcoming hiring cycle is to call their chambers directly. Typically, those justices who are hiring will accept materials beginning in July or August and will often start interviewing in mid-August or early September. Applicants should be prepared to address their connection to or interest in working in Rhode Island in both their application materials and their interviews.

Each justice conducts his/her interviews differently. Some justices interview very few applicants while others seem to interview a very large number of applicants. Those justices who tend to interview large numbers of applicants will generally hold off on making any clerkship offers until later in the hiring process. Those justices have, in the past, been known to end interviews by telling candidates to stay in touch and asking candidates to contact them before accepting another clerkship offer. This should be viewed as a genuine statement of interest in the candidate. In some instances, when a candidate then is able to contact the justice to inform him/her that another offer has been extended, the justice will extend the candidate an offer over the phone. If applying to the court, applicants should be aware that such a situation may arise and know how to handle the situation professionally.

TENNESSEE

The Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts' website (www.tncourts.gov/) has information on the different courts in Tennessee. It also contains a directory of judges with

biographies and contact information. Students interested in judicial clerkships in Tennessee should check out this website and note that clerks are not required to pass the Tennessee bar exam.

TENNESSEE SUPREME COURT

The Tennessee Supreme Court is the state's court of last resort. The five justices normally meet in three sections of the state to hear cases: (1) the western section (Jackson); (2) the middle section (Nashville); and (3) the eastern section (Knoxville). The justices' offices are located in Memphis, Nashville and Knoxville.

Each justice has the ability to hire two law clerks. Some justices have career clerks while others hire term clerks. Applicants should mail a cover letter, resume, transcript, writing sample, and three letters of recommendation to the individual justice of interest. Students should submit their applications in early summer (May) after their 2L year. While some justices wait to conduct interviews in the fall, others will conduct interviews in late summer. Offers can be made as early as July and as late as February.

TENNESSEE APPELLATE COURTS

The Tennessee Appellate Court is divided into the Tennessee Court of Appeals and the Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals. All appellate court judges are elected on a "retain-replace" ballot every eight years.

Tennessee Court of Appeals

The Tennessee Court of Appeals hears appeals in civil cases from trial courts and certain state boards and commissions. The court has 12 judges who sit in panels of three. The panels meet monthly in Jackson, Nashville, and Knoxville. When necessary, the court may meet in alternate locations. Although the judges meet in three sections of the state, their offices are located across the state in the following cities: Memphis, Jackson, Dyersburg, Nashville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga.

Each court of appeals judge has one or two law clerks, depending on whether the judge also has a judicial assistant. Many of the judges have career clerks; however, some hire rotating term clerks. Students interested in a clerkship should apply directly to a judge's chambers. Students should apply during the summer after their 2L year by mailing a cover letter, resume, transcript, writing sample and letters of recommendation. The judges typically finish interviewing and extend offers by in late fall or early spring.

Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals

The Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals hears trial court appeals in felony and misdemeanor cases, as well as post-conviction petitions. Similar to the Tennessee Court of Appeals, the

criminal appellate court has 12 judges who sit in panels of three in Jackson, Nashville, and Knoxville. When necessary, the court may meet in alternate locations. Tennessee Criminal Court of Appeals judges have offices located throughout the state in the following cities: Memphis, Jackson, Huntington, Nashville, Dickson, and Knoxville.

Each court of criminal appeals judge has one or two law clerks, depending on whether the judge also has a judicial assistant. Many of the judges have career clerks; however, some hire rotating term clerks. Students interested in a clerkship should apply directly to a judge's chambers. Students should apply during the summer after their 2L year by mailing a cover letter, resume, transcript, writing sample and letters of recommendation. The judges typically finish interviewing and extend offers by late fall or early spring.

TENNESSEE TRIAL COURTS

Tennessee's 95 counties are divided into 31 judicial districts. A clickable map of the judicial districts by county can be found at <http://tncourts.gov/administration/judicial-resources/judicial-district-map>. Within each district are Circuit Courts and Chancery Courts. Some districts also have Criminal Courts and Probate Courts. Judges in these courts are elected to eight year terms.

Circuit courts are courts of general jurisdiction in Tennessee. Circuit court judges hear civil and criminal cases and appeals of decisions from juvenile, municipal, and general sessions courts. Criminal cases are tried in circuit court except in districts with separate criminal courts established by the General Assembly (the largest districts have separate criminal courts). The jurisdiction of circuit court and chancery court often overlap. Chancery courts are courts of equity that handle a variety of issues including contract disputes, application for injunctions and name changes. A number of matters, such as divorces, adoptions, and workers' compensation are heard in either chancery or circuit court. Finally, probate courts have jurisdiction over probate of wills and administration of estates. Probate judges also handle conservatorships and guardianships.

Most trial court judges do not hire law school graduates as full-time law clerks. (Most will hire law students on a part-time basis.) There are a few exceptions in the larger districts such as Shelby County, Hamilton County, Knox County, and Davidson County. The courts in these counties encourage students to apply to the individual judge in the fall of their 3L year. Interviews and offers are extended in late fall and spring.

As of April 2018, no individual counties have term clerk positions available but a couple of Appellate Courts have openings posted on the Human Resources page located at <http://www.tncourts.gov/administration/human-resources>.

TEXAS

TEXAS SUPREME COURT

<http://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/>

There are eight justices and one chief justice who sit on this court in Austin, each elected to six-year terms on a staggered basis. It is the highest civil appellate court in the state, and hears civil and juvenile appeals. It is one of the very few (possibly now the only one) of state supreme courts that allows law clerks to sit in conference on its deliberations.

- Every year, each justice hires 2 law clerks, who typically come to the court right after law school. Law clerks are hired for a 1-year term, which begins in September and ends at the end of August.
- Each justice also has a staff attorney, who is a permanent employee. Staff attorneys are lawyers who usually have at least 3 years' practice experience before coming to the court. In most chambers, the staff attorney functions as a chief of staff and is the person directly responsible for overseeing the work of clerks and interns.
- Occasionally, a justice will hire an executive assistant who is a lawyer, whose duties are split between high-level administrative duties and law clerk duties, including legal research and writing.
- There is no specified time-frame for law clerk hiring and the justices vary on when they hire. There is also no application deadline. While students can apply at any time, many justices will consider applications after students have three semesters of grades. Students who apply at that point can update their applications after they receive spring grades.
- Students may apply to as many or as few justices as they desire – the applications are submitted separately to each chambers. The majority of applicants apply to all chambers.
- Students should NOT contact any chambers directly to inquire about the justice's hiring plans. The court maintains a clerkship brochure on its website that contains application information for each justice. While there is contact person listed on the brochure, the better practice is to check with your career services counselor if you need a question answered. Courts are happy to take their calls, but not those of applicants.

TEXAS COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS

<http://www.txcourts.gov/cca/>

There are eight judges and one chief judge on this court in Austin, each elected to six-year terms on a staggered basis. It is the highest criminal appellate court in the state and hears criminal appeals, including death penalty cases. Each of the judges hires one term law clerk. Most are for a one-year term, but some judges will consider a two-year term for a law clerk. Each judge has

his/her own hiring criteria and applications should be made separately to individual chambers. Check the court's website first for postings, as open postings are sometimes listed there. However, individual chambers may need to be contacted. For more information, contact your career counselor before contacting chambers to determine if a judge is hiring - - courts prefer to take calls from a career services office instead of individual applicants. If your career services office is unable to help you, you can contact individual chambers directly. Judges may take applications as early as the spring of 2L year, but check the website as later postings are sometimes made, even in the spring of 3L year.

TEXAS COURT OF APPEALS (FIRST THROUGH FOURTEENTH)

<http://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/courts-of-appeals/>

There are 14 intermediate appellate courts throughout the state with approximately 80 justices. These courts hear civil and criminal appeals, except for criminal cases involving the death penalty. Some of the justices take term clerks, known as briefing attorneys, but most have career clerks and do not hire clerks for term positions. This varies by court – both of the Houston districts (1st and 14th) hire term clerks and will sometimes post positions with career services offices at the end of 2L year. Check individual district websites for posted opportunities (<http://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/> - drop down menu under “Courts” for individual districts, then look for “Careers”). Sporadically justices in the following districts post and accept applications from 3L students for the coming term: 4th, 11th and 13th. Many districts will hire unpaid interns and externs and those opportunities are posted on the court websites. For more information, contact your career counselor before contacting chambers to determine if a justice is hiring. If your career services office is unable to help you, you can contact individual chambers directly. Applications should be sent in the summer of 2L year, after the applicants have four semesters of grades, although there can be postings as late as spring of 3L year.

TEXAS TRIAL COURTS

The Texas Trial courts do not hire full time clerks after graduation, but many do take volunteer judicial interns throughout the fall, spring and summer, and some judges will take volunteer post-bar interns. Many judges in the district courts, county-level courts, justice courts and municipal courts will have interns but none have a budget to pay interns or clerks. There are programs through which some students can obtain stipends for volunteering as a judicial intern, but they are the exception and not the rule.

VIRGINIA

Information and some employment opportunities within the Virginia Court System may be found at <http://www.courts.state.va.us/courts/home.html>. Links to individual Circuit Court and General District Court or Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court homepages may be found on this site. Many Virginia judicial clerkship opportunities may be found at <http://jobs.virginia.gov/>.

SUPREME COURT

All of the seven justices on this court hire term clerks, for terms lasting one to two years. Some also have career clerks. The opening of the application process varies among the seven justices, but most begin accepting applications in the spring of students' second year. All justices require a cover letter, resume, transcript, writing sample and at least two letters of recommendation. Some justices provide email notification to candidates once their application has been received.

Application deadlines also vary, but it is best to apply before September, as most interviews are held in late summer or early fall. Candidates are notified of interviews by email or letter.

The majority of justices prefer candidates to sit for the bar exam in Virginia. Justice's chambers are located in various areas around the state. The justices ask that candidates be certain they are willing to live in or commute to the area prior to applying for the clerkship.

COURT OF APPEALS OF VIRGINIA

All of the eleven judges on this court hire term clerks, for terms lasting one to two years. Some also have career clerks. For most judges, the application process is conducted on a rolling basis and remains open until the positions are filled. For this reason, it is best to apply as early as possible. All judges require a cover letter and writing sample. Some also request a transcript and letters of recommendation.

Most interviews are held in the fall; however, some judges choose to interview whenever they receive a candidate's application. Candidates are notified of interviews by telephone, email or letter.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to hone their writing skills. The majority of judges on this court require that candidates take a two to three hour writing test, if called in for an interview. A candidate's writing ability is often weighted more heavily than the substance of their resume or interview.

Since the clerks will be analyzing Virginia law, the Judges on this court prefer that candidates sit for the bar exam in Virginia, although it is not required by all.

VIRGINIA CIRCUIT COURTS

There is a circuit court in each city and county in Virginia (31 circuits and 120 courts). There are General District Courts with limited civil/criminal jurisdiction in all 32 Districts, and Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Courts in all 32 Districts. Some of the circuit courts hire clerks for terms of one year, while some maintain career clerks. Circuit courts that hire term clerks generally begin accepting applications in late summer and early fall of an applicant's third year of law school.

The required application materials range from a cover letter and resume only to cover letter, resume, transcript, writing sample, multiple recommendation letters, and a city or county government employment application form. Some circuit courts also require successful candidates to sit for the Virginia bar exam.

Some circuit courts begin conducting interviews in the fall of a candidate's third year, while others wait until the spring semester of to begin conducting interviews. Candidates may be notified of interviews by telephone, email or letter.

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court of Washington is comprised of nine justices, each elected to a six-year term. The Court has no official deadline for judicial clerkship applications. Many of the justices interview potential judicial law clerks in the winter or early spring, so the Court advises applicants to submit their application packages as early as feasible.

Judicial Clerkship information and availability may be found at:

http://www.courts.wa.gov/appellate_trial_courts/supreme/?fa=atc_supreme.clerkship

For more specific information about a justice's application deadline, please contact that individual justice's chambers. See link here for directory:

http://www.courts.wa.gov/court_dir/orgs/112.html

WASHINGTON COURT OF APPEALS, DIVISION I

The Washington State Court of Appeals, Division I, is located in Seattle, Washington. Judge biographies and current vacancies can be found at:

http://www.courts.wa.gov/appellate_trial_courts/?fa=atc.div1clerks

WASHINGTON COURT OF APPEALS, DIVISION II

The Washington State Court of Appeals, Division II, is located in Tacoma, Washington. Judge biographies and current vacancies can be found at:

http://www.courts.wa.gov/appellate_trial_courts/?fa=atc.div2clerks. The Court has no official deadline for judicial clerkship applications, however, many of the judges begin interviews in the winter or early spring, so the Court advises applicants to submit their application packages as early as feasible. Interested applicants may apply via email (addresses provided at above link) or via mail by submitting 1) Cover letter; 2) Resume; 3) Self-edited writing sample; 4) Unofficial law school transcript; and 5) Three letters of recommendation (the person writing the letter of recommendation may mail it directly to the judge).

Mail application materials to each judge of interest to:
Washington State Court of Appeals, Division II
950 Broadway, Suite 300
Tacoma, Washington, 98402

WASHINGTON COURT OF APPEALS, DIVISION III

The Washington State Court of Appeals, Division III is located in Spokane, Washington. Judge biographies and current vacancies can be found at:

http://www.courts.wa.gov/appellate_trial_courts/?fa=atc.display_divs&folderID=div3&fileID=clerkship. Interested candidates must submit 1) Cover letter; 2) Resume; 3) Self-edited writing sample; 4) Unofficial law school transcript; and 5) Three letters of recommendation.

Mail application materials to:
Washington State Court of Appeals, Division III
500 N Cedar St
Spokane, WA 99201

WASHINGTON TRIAL COURTS

Washington State Trial Courts often hire recent graduates for term law clerk positions in Superior, District and Municipal courts. Available positions, application instructions, and hiring timelines vary by county and court. Counties with websites can be found here:

http://www.courts.wa.gov/appellate_trial_courts/.

WEST VIRGINIA

SUPREME COURT OF APPEALS

The Supreme Court of Appeals is West Virginia's highest court and the court of last resort. The five Supreme Court justices hear appeals of decisions over all matters decided in the circuit courts, including criminal convictions affirmed on appeal from magistrate court and appeals from administrative agencies. The Office of Counsel serves as central staff counsel to the Supreme Court. The Office of Counsel provides memoranda on legal issues to assist the Court in its role as the court of last resort in West Virginia. The various motions and other matters requiring rulings in cases pending before the Court are presented to the Court through the Office of Counsel.

CIRCUIT COURTS

There are thirty-one circuit courts in West Virginia with a total of seventy-four circuit judges. Circuit courts are West Virginia's only general jurisdiction trial courts of record.

The Administrative Office of West Virginia Courts recruits applicants year-round to screen for the creation of the pool of qualified candidates from which the circuit judges will make their hiring decisions. Law clerks can be hired directly by the circuit judge from either the pool of qualified candidates screened by the Administrative Office or from outside the pool, provided that the candidate is first approved by the Administrative Office. Law Clerk positions are posted at http://www.courtswv.gov/jobs_clerks.html.

WYOMING

SUPREME COURT OPPORTUNITIES (THERE IS NO INTERMEDIATE COURT OF APPEALS)

Most justices hire permanent Staff Attorneys as law clerks, but will occasionally use the Judicial Assistant position to hire a term elbow clerk. Candidates should share their connections to Wyoming or the Rocky Mountain region in their cover letters. Regardless, all positions are posted through the Wyoming Judicial Center Careers page at: <http://www.courts.state.wy.us/Administration/Careers>

DISTRICT COURT OPPORTUNITIES

All Districts have at least one law clerk, and the larger Districts have multiple clerks. The judges prefer two year commitments, but the hiring is done throughout the year. Candidates should share their connections to Wyoming or the Rocky Mountain region in their cover letters. Candidates should pay special attention to the job posting and materials requested, as most changes tweak their postings based on trying to weed out those who neglect to follow instructions. All positions are posted through the Wyoming Judicial Center Careers page at: <http://www.courts.state.wy.us/Administration/Careers>

INTERNSHIP/EXTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

All levels of courts will accept students as unpaid interns or externship credit. The contact information for the Supreme Court, District Courts, and Circuit Courts can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch site: <http://www.courts.state.wy.us/>. Contact information for Municipal Court judges will be found on the individual municipal websites.