



Specialty Courts in the Northeast:

Opportunities and Application Processes

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Spotlight on Specialty Courts in the
Northeast and Beyond

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State Court Judicial Clerkship Information

STATE: Maine

SPECIALTY COURT: Business and Consumer Court

JURISDICTION

- Docket consists of “[c]ases . . . in which:
 1. The principal claim or claims involve matters of significance to the transactions, operation or governance of a business entity and/or the rights of a consumer arising out of transactions or other dealings with a business entity, and
 2. The case requires specialized and differentiated judicial management.” Business and Consumer Court website.

INFO

- Term is August 15, 2016 – August 14, 2017.
- Salary is \$45,219.20.
- One clerkship is available, and will be based in Portland.
- Cases are drawn from the regular docket of the Superior and District Court.
- Clerk works with two or more judges designated by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, who manage the Business and Consumer Court.
- *En banc* interviews held the week of September 21, 2015 in Portland.
- Website: http://courts.maine.gov/maine_courts/business/index.shtml

REQUIREMENTS

- Judges consider academic and class standing; Law Review, Moot Court, and other significant research or writing experience; prior employment; demonstrated writing ability; and faculty, employer, and personal recommendations.

APPLY

- *WHO:* Apply centrally.
- *WHAT:*
 - Cover letter
 - Resume
 - School-Issued Law School Transcript
 - Writing Sample (10 pages double-spaced. May be edited or critiqued by others, but should primarily reflect the applicant’s own work)
 - 2 Recommendation Letters (can be sent separately)
 - Completed Applicant Information Survey
 - Additional writing sample responding to a prompt supplied by the justices if selected for an interview

MAINE

- *WHEN:* August 7, 2015 at 4 p.m.
- *WHERE:*
 - Email in PDF format to Lawclerkrecruit@courts.maine.gov OR
 - Mail to:

Attn: Law Clerk Recruitment – Maine Superior Court
Administrative Office of the Courts
P.O. Box 4820, 125 Presumpscot Street
Portland, ME 04112-4820

Contact Heidi Carpenter (207-822-4174 or heidi.carpenter@courts.maine.gov) with questions.

MASSACHUSETTS

State Court Judicial Clerkship Information

STATE: Massachusetts

SPECIALTY COURT: Housing Court

JURISDICTION

- “[J]urisdiction over civil and criminal actions, including equitable relief, which involve the health, safety, or welfare of the occupants or owners of residential housing”.
- “[H]ears summary process (eviction) cases, small claims cases, and civil actions involving personal injury, property damage, breach of contract, discrimination, and other claims”, as well as “code enforcement actions and appeals of local zoning board decisions that affect residential housing”. Housing Court website.

INFO

- Term is September 2015 – August 2016. May be invited to return for additional year.
- Court has five divisions: Boston, Northeast, Southeast, Western, and Worcester. Court conducts sessions in over 18 locations each week.
- Law clerk supports all justices.
- Law clerk is based in Boston, but may travel to other courthouses in Massachusetts.
- Website: <http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/trial-court/hc/>

APPLY

- *WHO:* Apply centrally for clerkship.
- *WHAT:*
 - Trial Court application and resume (in PDF format) must be submitted online (www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html).
 - Cover letter, unofficial law school transcript, and 5-7 page writing sample must be emailed to MATrialCourtJobs@jud.state.ma.us by end of the day on June 29, 2015.
 - Cover letter should be addressed to:

Benjamin O. Adeyinka
Administrative Attorney
Administrative Office of the Housing Court
Edward W. Brooke Courthouse
24 New Chardon Street, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
 - Official law school transcript and second writing sample required if selected for an interview.

MASSACHUSETTS

- *WHEN:* June 19 – June 29, 2015
- *WHERE:* <http://www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html> and email.

SPECIALTY COURT: Juvenile Court

JURISDICTION

- “[J]urisdiction over civil and criminal matters including delinquencies, youthful offender cases, care and protections and children requiring assistance cases.” Juvenile Court website.

INFO

- Term runs from September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017.
- Salary is \$59,333.29.
- Law clerks serve in Eastern or Western Massachusetts. Applicants indicate on the Trial Court application whether they want to be considered for a clerkship in Eastern or Western Massachusetts, or both. Majority of clerkships are in Eastern Massachusetts.
- Court employs a rotation system for law clerks, who rotate locations every 3-6 months. Eastern Massachusetts law clerks may be assigned to: Barnstable, Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester. Western Massachusetts law clerks may be assigned to Berkshire, Franklin/Hampshire, Hampden, and Worcester.
- Law clerks must reside in Massachusetts for the duration of clerkship.
- Website: <http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/trial-court/juv/>

REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum requirements for clerkship include:
 - Excellent legal writing, communication, analytical, and legal research (using both online and book resources) skills.
 - Demonstrated ability to follow written and oral instructions; manage, prioritize, and complete simultaneous assignments from various judges; meet deadlines and otherwise complete assignments in a timely manner; work well independently while maintaining productivity and demonstrating good judgment; work well with others in a professional setting, including judges, managers, court staff, and other law clerks.
 - Access to reliable car and the willingness and ability to travel as assigned.
 - Genuine commitment to serving the full term of clerkship.
- Additional preferred qualifications include:
 - Current legal practice or intent to practice law in Massachusetts.
 - Substantial legal research and writing experience, including prior experience as a judicial intern for a Juvenile Court judge.
 - Courses in juvenile law, research assistant positions, prior work experience in the areas of juvenile law and clinical placements.

MASSACHUSETTS

- Demonstrated commitment to government or public service.
- Other requirements listed in job posting.

APPLY

- *WHO*: Apply centrally for clerkship. Indicate on Trial Court application whether applicant wants to be considered for Eastern or Western Massachusetts, or both.
- *WHAT*:
 - Trial Court application, resume (in PDF format), and references must be submitted online (www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html).
 - Recommendation letters are optional. If submitted, letters (in PDF format) must be submitted online.
 - Statement of interest, official law school transcript, writing sample in response to specific legal question provided to applicant, and an additional writing sample required if selected for an interview.
- *WHEN*: November 23 – November 30, 2015
- *WHERE*: <http://www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html>

SPECIALTY COURT: Land Court

JURISDICTION

- “[J]urisdiction over the registration of title to real property, and foreclosure and redemption of real estate tax liens”, “share[d] jurisdiction over matters arising out of decisions by local planning boards and zoning boards of appeal, and over most property matters”, and “superintendence authority over the registered land offices in each Registry of Deeds.” Land Court website.

INFO

- No set term. Most clerkships last 1 or 2 years, but some clerkships last 3-5 years.
- Salary is \$56,741.44.
- Court sits primarily in Boston, but also sits elsewhere in Massachusetts.
- Law clerks are assigned to work for specific judge(s), but rotate every few months or will periodically assist another judge with heavy workload.
- Clerkships posted in 2015 were only for alumni applicants.
- Law clerks must reside in Massachusetts for the duration of clerkship.
- Website: <http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/trial-court/lc/>

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REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum requirements for clerkship include:
 - Excellent legal writing, communication, analytical, and legal research (using both online and book resources) skills.
 - Demonstrated ability to follow written and oral instructions; manage, prioritize, and complete simultaneous assignments; meet deadlines and otherwise complete assignments in a timely manner; work well independently while maintaining productivity and demonstrating good judgment; work well with others in a professional setting, including judges, managers, court staff, and other law clerks.
 - Genuine commitment to serving the full term of the clerkship.
- Other requirements listed in job posting.

APPLY

- *WHO*: Apply centrally for clerkship.
- *WHAT*:
 - Trial Court application and resume (in PDF format) must be submitted online (www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html).
 - Statement of interest, official law school transcript, writing sample, and references required if selected for an interview.
- *WHEN*: April 14 – May 1, 2015
- *WHERE*: <http://www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html>

SPECIALTY COURT: Probate and Family Court

JURISDICTION

- “[J]urisdiction over family-related and probate matters such as divorce, paternity, child support, custody, visitation, adoption, termination of parental rights, abuse prevention and wills, estates, trusts, guardianships, conservatorships, and changes of name.” Probate and Family Court website.

INFO

- Term runs from September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017.
- Salary is \$57,592.56.
- Law clerks serve in Eastern or Western Massachusetts. Applicants indicate on the Trial Court application whether they want to be considered for a clerkship in Eastern or Western Massachusetts. Majority of clerkships are in Eastern Massachusetts.

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- Court employs a rotation system for law clerks, who rotate locations every 4-6 months. Eastern Massachusetts law clerks may be assigned to: Barnstable, Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester. Western Massachusetts law clerks may be assigned to Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire.
- Law clerks must reside in Massachusetts for the duration of clerkship.
- Website: <http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/trial-court/pfc/>

REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum requirements for clerkship include:
 - Excellent legal writing, communication, analytical, and legal research (using both online and book resources) skills.
 - Access to reliable car and willingness and ability to travel as assigned.
 - Demonstrated ability to follow written and oral instructions; manage, prioritize, and complete simultaneous assignments from various judges; meet deadlines and otherwise complete assignments in a timely manner; work well independently while maintaining productivity and demonstrating good judgment; and work well with others in a professional setting, including judges, managers, court staff, and other law clerks.
 - Genuine commitment to serving the full term of the clerkship.
- Additional preferred qualifications include:
 - Membership in the Massachusetts Bar and intent to practice law in Massachusetts.
 - Substantial legal research and writing experience, including prior experience as a Probate and Family Court Law Fellow or judicial intern for a Probate and Family Court judge.
 - Courses in probate and/or family law, research assistant positions, prior work experience in the areas of probate and family law and clinical placements.
 - Demonstrated commitment to government or public service.
- Other requirements listed in job posting.

APPLY

- *WHO*: Apply centrally for clerkship. Indicate on Trial Court application whether applicant wants to be considered for Eastern or Western Massachusetts.
- *WHAT*:
 - Trial Court application and resume (in PDF format) must be submitted online (www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html).
 - Official or unofficial transcript and 2 copies of writing sample (not to exceed 6 pages) in response to fact pattern in job posting must be received by 4 p.m. on November 10, 2015 by mail or hand-delivery at:

MASSACHUSETTS

Administrative Office of the Probate and Family Court
Mezzanine Level
John Adams Courthouse
One Pemberton Square
Boston, MA 02108
ATTN: Law Clerk Program

- Statement of interest, official law school transcript, or additional writing sample may be required if selected for an interview.
- Letters of recommendation are not requested or required.
- *WHEN:* October 19 – November 10, 2015
- *WHERE:* <http://www.mass.gov/courts/jobs/tc-appeals-job-post-gen.html> and mail or hand-delivery.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

State Court Judicial Clerkship Information

STATE: New Hampshire

SPECIALTY COURT: Circuit Court, Family Division
Circuit Court, Probate Division

JURISDICTION

- Family Division: “[C]ases include divorce/parenting action, child support, domestic violence petitions, guardianship of minors, termination of parental rights, abuse/neglect cases, children in need of services, juvenile delinquency, and some adoptions.” Family Division website.
- Probate Division: “[J]urisdiction over a variety of issues including all matters related to wills, trusts and estates, guardianships and involuntary commitment proceedings, adoptions, name changes and partition of real estate.” Probate Division website.

INFO

- Unpaid internships only. No post-graduate clerkships.
- Websites:
 - Family Division: <http://www.courts.state.nh.us/fdpp/index.htm>
 - Probate Division: <http://www.courts.state.nh.us/probate/>

APPLY

- *WHO:* Rebeka Fortress, Staff Attorney
- *WHAT:*
 - Cover Letter (identifying geographic area in which applicant would be interested in interning)
 - Resume
 - Writing Sample (less than 11 pages)
- *WHEN:* Any time in preceding academic year, but targeting end of first semester or beginning of second semester.
- *WHERE:* Email to RFortess@courts.state.nh.us.

RHODE ISLAND

State Court Judicial Clerkship Information

STATE: Rhode Island

SPECIALTY COURT: Family Court
Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal

JURISDICTION

- Family Court:
 - “[J]urisdiction to hear and determine all petitions for divorce and any motions in conjunction with divorce proceedings, such as motions relating to the distribution of property, alimony, support, and custody of children”, as well as “petitions for separate maintenance and complaints regarding support for parents and children”.
 - “[J]urisdiction over matters relating to delinquent, wayward, dependent, neglected, abused, or mentally deficient or mentally disordered children”, as well as “adoptions, child marriages, paternity proceedings, and a number of other matters involving domestic relations and juveniles”. Family Court website.
- Traffic Tribunal
 - “[J]urisdiction over civil traffic offenses committed in Rhode Island, including breathalyzer refusals”.
 - “[A]uthority over certain Department of Environmental Management offenses”.
 - “[O]versight responsibilities and concurrent jurisdiction with the Municipal Courts for lesser traffic offenses”. Traffic Tribunal website.

INFO

- Term is August 29, 2016 – August 25, 2017.
- Salary is \$52,445.00 with six-month step increase.
- Rhode Island Supreme Court Trial Court Law Clerk Department consists of 16 law clerks who support the state’s trial courts (Superior, District, and Family Courts, as well as the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal).
- Interview invitations will be made by January 15, 2016.
- Websites:
 - Family Court: <https://www.courts.ri.gov/Courts/FamilyCourt/Pages/default.aspx>
 - Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal: <https://www.courts.ri.gov/Courts/rhodeislandtraffictribunal/Pages/default.aspx>.

REQUIREMENTS

- Outstanding academic records.
- Excellent research and writing skills.

RHODE ISLAND

APPLY

- *WHO*: Apply centrally.
- *WHAT*:
 - Cover letter indicating applicant is applying for a Trial Court Clerkship
 - Resume
 - Official Law School Transcript (incomplete, unofficial transcript may be submitted and later supplemented by complete, official transcript when available)
 - 2 Recommendation Letters (1 from law school professor who can comment on applicant's writing and academic skills)
 - 2 full-length writing samples (1 designated as primary and 1 as secondary; both only minimally edited, if at all, with extent of editing acknowledged)
- *WHEN*: October 16, 2015
- *WHERE*: Mail applications to:

Trial Court Law Clerk Department
c/o Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell
Rhode Island Supreme Court
250 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903

Preferred, but not required, that application materials be sent in one mailing.

Contact Carol Fagnoli (cfagnoli@courts.ri.gov) with any questions.

VERMONT

State Court Judicial Clerkship Information

STATE: Vermont

SPECIALTY COURT: Superior Court, Environmental Division

JURISDICTION

- “[H]ears appeals from state land use permit decisions (Act 250), from state environmental permits and other decisions of the Agency of Natural Resources, and from municipal land use zoning and planning decisions”, as well as “municipal land use enforcement cases, and enforcement actions brought by the Agency of Natural Resources and Natural Resources Board”. Superior Court, Env’tl Division website.

INFO

- Some law clerks hired through centrally organized trial court law clerk program are assigned exclusively to the environmental division.
- Interviews are held in June 2016.
- Law clerks are hired annually for one-year positions starting each September.
- Second year, senior, and staff attorney positions are possible.
- Website: <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/GTC/Environmental/default.aspx>

APPLY

- *WHO:* Apply centrally.
- *WHAT:*
 - Short cover letter indicating interest in environmental division positions
 - Resume with e-mail address, which will be relied upon for correspondence
 - Current law school transcript (may be unofficial)
 - Official class rank or equivalent (if not reported by school, please explain)
 - 2 recommendation letters (may be sent separately from other materials)
 - Recent legal writing sample(s) demonstrating aptitude for trial court-level judicial opinion writing. *Non-academic writing samples strongly preferred.*
 - Applicants are welcome to submit additional materials as they see fit.
- *WHEN:* March 1 – May 15, 2016
- *WHERE:* E-mail one set of materials per application in PDF format to jud.recruitment@vermont.gov. Any materials that sent on paper should be mailed to:

Robert Hubbard
Chief Staff Attorney
Washington Civil Division
65 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602

