

If you are interested in applying for state trial level clerkships for post-graduation (to start in the fall of 2019), **now is the time** to start preparing and sending those applications. Many state trial court judges hire on a rolling basis, including the D.C. Superior Court. Below is detailed information on how to apply for these opportunities and how the Career Center can assist you with your applications. Included in this guide is info about:

1. How to Apply: Judicial Clerkship Postings and Direct Applications
2. Standard Application Packet
3. Mailing Services and Letters of Recommendation
4. Specific information for D.C. Court of Appeals, D.C. Superior Court, Maryland State Trial Courts, Virginia, New Jersey, New York, and California

How to Apply: Judicial Clerkship Postings in CORE and Direct Applications

CORE: The Career Center often receives announcements from specific judges, both local and national, for various state court clerkships. We post these opportunities in CORE under "Job Listings."

Direct applications: Because most judges do not advertise their open positions with us, we strongly recommend that you research hiring practices by looking up specific courts/judges (see specific resources below) and apply broadly, sending your applications directly to the courts and/or judges where you are interested. It is up to you to research when is the best time to apply to which judges and to create an Excel spreadsheet with the names and addresses of the judges to which you are applying. For more information on timing for DC Court of Appeals, DC Superior Court, and courts in Maryland, Virginia and New Jersey, see below. (FYI: New York and California generally do not hire state trial level law clerks except in limited circumstances.)

- Researching Courts: Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures
 - The Vermont Law School 2018-2019 Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures is now available online. The Guide includes current information on the application procedures, timing, salary, and hiring processes for judicial clerkships in all fifty states and several territories. The procedures for both state appellate and trial courts are included. To access the guide, visit: <http://forms.vermontlaw.edu/career/guides/>. The username is: copper. The password is: beech. By following the link, you can access the complete Guide and/or individual states for clerkship information.
- Varying Deadlines for State Courts: As you can see in the Vermont Guide, the deadlines for state courts vary. Most state trial courts have deadlines in the fall. If you want our office to mail out your applications with your letters of recommendation, you will need to coordinate with our office as early as you can.

Standard Application Packet

For most state court judges, you will need to mail (or coordinate with our office to mail) a hard copy of your materials individually to each judge. Unless otherwise specified, a standard application consists of:

- *Cover letter* (properly addressed and signed; printed on resume paper)
- *Resume* (printed on resume paper)
- *Law School Transcript*. Official or unofficial copies are fine. Do not use a printout from the GWeb Portal.
- *Writing Sample*, typically 10-12 pages
- *References* (optional; printed on resume paper if included) OR

- *2 - 3 Letters of Recommendation.* At least one should be from a professor. If you do not have letters of recommendation, you can choose to send a list of references. Often, letters of recommendation are optional.

The Career Center has "GW Law" folders in which that you can place your materials before mailing your applications to judges. Stop by the front desk in the main Career Center suite (B310) to pick up those folders. You can mail the applications yourself, or you can use our mailing services. (See below for more information.)

Mailing Services and Letters of Recommendation

The clerkship advising staff can assist in mailing your applications to judges, but we do not handle recommendation letters from non-GW Law faculty members (which you must arrange to submit to judges yourself).

To make sure you prepare your paper applications correctly, please see the attached "Quick Checklist for Paper Applications." As specified in the checklist, you must create an Excel spreadsheet with the names and addresses of the judges to which you are applying. The clerkship team will then use that spreadsheet to complete a mail merge and send your applications.

The clerkship team can also send letters of recommendation from GW Law faculty members. GW Law professors should EMAIL their letters to clerkship@law.gwu.edu, and you can coordinate with our office once we receive your letters from faculty. If you choose to mail your applications yourself, you can ask the clerkship team to mail your letters of recommendation separately if you prefer. If you do NOT have letters of recommendation yet, you can always supplement your applications with them at a later date. We advise that you should NOT substantially delay sending out your applications because you are waiting for letters of recommendation. It's better to apply now and supplement later, if necessary.

We do NOT handle non-GW faculty letters, so you are responsible for coordinating with your recommender and submitting those letters yourself.

D.C. Court of Appeals

The appellate judges typically review applications from 2Ls over the spring (for a clerkship to begin after graduation) and into the summer. There are two types of law clerk positions -- law clerk (i.e. the "right hand" clerk to the judge, although the senior judges do share clerks) and court clerk (which is like a "staff attorney" position and the clerks assist all of the judges). For law clerk positions, send individual applications to each judge and senior judge. The senior judges will hire via a committee, and typically review applications in late summer. See the list of DC Court of Appeals judges in the attached excel spreadsheet.

For the "Court Clerk" position, send your application materials including a cover letter addressed to "Ms. Mason" with subject line "Re: Court Clerk Position 2019 Term" to:

Rosanna Mason
Staff Counsel
District of Columbia Court of Appeals
Historic Courthouse
430 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 879-2718
rmason@dcappeals.gov

D.C. Superior Court

Judges in the D.C. Superior Court do not follow any specific hiring timeline, and hiring practices vary widely among judges. A few judges hire as early as September or October, while there are also judges who wait to hire in January and February. We generally advise that students should apply to all of the judges, if interested, in August/September. You need to mail an individual hard-copy application to each judge. If you use the clerkship mailing services available in the Career Center, applications will be mailed on a first-come, first-served basis.

You can research D.C. Superior Court judges by visiting the Court's website at www.dccourts.gov. Judges are assigned to "seat assignments" (i.e. civil, criminal, family law, etc.) and those assignments rotate in January of each year. Judges can spend several years in one seat assignment, but the final decisions are made by the Chief Judge usually in November. We advise that you apply broadly and not target particular judges based on their current docket, since that may change by the time you start clerking in 2019. You can find contact information to create for Superior Court judges in the Excel spreadsheet on the Judicial Clerkships and Internships webpage, and you can use this spreadsheet to create your application spreadsheet.

Starting in October, our office reaches out to the judges to see which judges have completed hiring, and we will share that information with students.

Maryland State Trial Courts

Judges in the Maryland trial courts also do not follow any specific hiring timeline. A few judges hire as early as September or October, while there are also judges who wait to hire until next January and February (i.e. spring of 3L year). We generally advise that students should apply to all of the judges, if interested, in early September. You need to mail an individual hard-copy application to each judge. You can find contact information for judges on the Maryland court website: <http://www.courts.state.md.us/courtsdirectory/>. You can use this list to create a mail merge. Circuit courts typically hire law clerks, while district courts (which are really small claims courts) do not. Most Maryland Courts of Appeals and Courts of Special Appeals hire earlier, typically in March and April of 2L year.

Virginia

Virginia judges hire county by county and share law clerks. We often receive job announcements that we post on CORE. If there are particular counties that you are interested in for which there are no postings, you should call those counties directly.

New Jersey

State courts in New Jersey have a robust clerkship hiring program. Interested students should visit the Judiciary's Law Clerk Recruitment information page (<http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/public/lawclerks.html>), where you can set up an account to view and apply to open clerkship positions online via the Judiciary's portal. Hiring typically opens in mid-June for clerkships to begin the following fall. Please also see the New Jersey Judiciary Law Clerk Application and Hiring Process Fact Sheet at <https://www.njcourts.gov/public/assets/lawclerkrecruitmentfactsheet.pdf>. Please see the Vermont Guide for more information on this process.

New York

Most judges in New York typically do not hire term law clerks and instead rely on long-term "career clerks." Judges on the highest court, New York Court of Appeals, and the mid-level appellate courts occasionally hire clerks, and some of the the courts also hire some "Central Legal Research Staff," although hiring is very competitive and many judges retain clerks for multiple years. At the trial court (Supreme and County Courts), some judges hire individual clerks. For more information, please see the Vermont Guide and look for vacancies through the New York State Unified Court System website (<http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/cts-outside-nyc.shtml>).

California

Most California state judges only have volunteer law clerk positions. However, San Francisco and Los Angeles County Superior Courts do have a limited law clerk hiring program. For more information, see <http://www.lacourt.org/> and <http://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/>. For information on how to check for additional Superior Court hiring by county, please see the Vermont Guide.

Counseling from the Career Center

Your career counselor in the Career Center is available to meet with you and can provide general advice about how a state court clerkship fits in with your overall career plan. If you have specific questions, you may also schedule an appointment with either Lauren Seffel or Julie McLaughlin [online](#).

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