

# JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP GUIDE



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## **I. WHAT IS A JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP?**

A judicial internship is an unpaid position in which a law student acts as a quasi-law clerk to a judge. Judicial internships are available during the summer, as well as during the fall and spring semesters. Although an intern's responsibilities may vary depending on the court or judge, the internship experience provides an invaluable opportunity for law students to view the inner workings of the judicial process. Many judges assign interns tasks similar to those that their law clerks perform. As an intern, it is likely that you will attend judicial proceedings, hone your legal research and writing skills by crafting bench memos or even drafts of opinions, and have the opportunity to discuss legal issues with the judge and the judge's law clerk(s). Judicial internships are generally unpaid, but most former judicial interns agree that the experience outweighs any brief monetary loss. As discussed in greater detail below, you may also be eligible to receive academic credit for your internship under the Career Development Office's ("CDO") Externship Program.

This Guide answers questions you may have about the internship experience and how to apply for internships. For additional information regarding judicial internships please contact your CDO advisor.

If you intern for a judge and enjoy the experience, we encourage you to seek out post-graduate positions as a judicial law clerk. For a detailed review of post-graduate judicial clerkships, please review the CDO's Judicial Clerkships Guide available in the CDO or on the CDO's website. Those interested in post-graduate judicial clerkships should also contact the Director of Judicial Clerkships, Karen Warren, at [kwarren@law.miami.edu](mailto:kwarren@law.miami.edu).

## **II. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP AND EXTERNSHIP?**

There is very little, if any, substantive difference between a judicial "internship" and a judicial "externship." Essentially, the term "externship" connotes that the student is receiving academic credit for his/her work with the judge. For simplicity purposes, the term "intern" and "internship" are used throughout this Guide, however the material relates equally to judicial "externs" and "externships."

The CDO's Externship Program provides a mechanism for students to obtain academic credit while working for a judge. Under the Judicial Externship Program, students are required to attend a weekly class, which constitutes the academic component of the externship. As part of the academic component students must complete and submit written assignments in addition to any work that is assigned directly by the judge. Students who intern or extern for a judge should use the title "Judicial Intern" or "Judicial Extern" on their resume. Do *not* use the title "Judicial Clerk" or "Law Clerk," as those titles refer to post-graduate, full time positions.

If you secure a position with a judge you should determine, based on your academic credit needs and time available in your schedule, whether you want to convert your judicial internship into a for-credit externship. For information regarding the Externship Program, please visit <http://www.law.miami.edu/career-development-office/externship-program.php?op=3>. If you have questions, you may contact the Director of the Miami Law Externship Program, Sajani Desai Granquist, at [sdesai@law.miami.edu](mailto:sdesai@law.miami.edu).

### III. TO WHOM SHOULD I APPLY?

Judicial internships are available with federal and state court judges. Cases pending in federal court will involve issues dealing with federal constitutional and statutory law. A number of general common law cases arising under diversity jurisdiction will also form part of a federal judge's docket. State courts, in contrast to federal courts, tend to have a broader variety of cases. A state court judicial intern may research issues ranging from child custody or involuntary manslaughter to water rights and contract disputes.

#### 1. FEDERAL COURT INTERNSHIPS

Internship opportunities exist within the federal court system with the following types of judges. For an overview of the federal courts, please visit <http://www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts.aspx>.

**U.S. District Judges** – A federal district court (the trial level court in the federal system) is an excellent place to work for a semester. A typical federal district judge may have a few hundred cases on his or her docket. Most district judges have their interns do some or all of the following things: attend hearings and trials; conduct legal research; prepare research memoranda; and write rough drafts of opinions and orders. You will have the opportunity to see how real cases are managed, how motions are argued and decided, and how jury trials are lost and won. When trials heat up, you are in the thick of things that attorneys often view only from the outside (if at all), including rulings on evidentiary matters and jury selection.

**U.S. Magistrate Judges** – Federal magistrate judges are appointed by the district judges within their judicial districts. Magistrate judges serve eight-year terms renewable at the discretion of the U.S. District Court. Magistrate judges are “paired” with one or more district judges. For a list of pairings within the Southern District of Florida, please visit <https://www.flsd.uscourts.gov/wp-content/uploads/adminOrders/2017/2017-38.pdf>

In civil proceedings, the magistrate judge enters orders on non-dispositive pre-trial motions, such as motions to compel discovery and motions in limine. In some instances, district judges will also refer dispositive matters to the magistrate judges, such as motions to dismiss and motions for summary judgment. The magistrate judge issues reports and recommendations on referred motions and, in certain cases, proposes findings of fact. A magistrate judge may determine any preliminary matters and conduct all necessary

evidentiary hearings or other proceedings arising in the exercise of his/her authority. When all parties consent, a full-time magistrate judge may conduct any or all proceedings in a civil case filed with the court and enter a final judgment. If you are interested in civil litigation, interning for a magistrate judge can give you great hands-on training in the discovery process.

In criminal proceedings, a magistrate judge administers oaths on criminal complaints, issues search and arrest warrants, conducts preliminary hearings, tries persons accused of misdemeanors (with district court authorization), enters orders on non-dispositive pre-trial motions, issues reports and recommendations and, in certain cases, proposes findings of fact. Magistrate judges also review state habeas corpus actions. Accordingly, interning for a magistrate judge can also be a very useful experience if you are interested in criminal law.

For more information on the role and authority of magistrate judges, please consult: <http://www.fmja.org/>.

**U.S. Bankruptcy Judges** – Every federal district has a bankruptcy court. Bankruptcy courts handle complex and interesting matters related to the ongoing operations of businesses seeking bankruptcy protection. Bankruptcy court interns may deal with a wide range of legal issues, ranging from union-management disputes to the settlement of complex litigation claims. For these reasons, an internship with a bankruptcy judge can be valuable even if you don't plan to practice bankruptcy law.

**U.S. Courts of Appeals Judges** – Federal courts of appeals often do not take interns. However, if you are able to find a federal appellate judge willing to hire you, this can also offer an incredibly valuable internship experience. The lives of appellate court clerks, and by extension, the interns, are usually less hustle-bustle and more cloistered than the lives of those working in district courts. Appellate court clerks and interns typically read briefs, do extensive legal research, write memoranda to the judge about upcoming cases, attend oral arguments, and write rough drafts of opinions. You will not see trials as an intern for a U.S. Court of Appeals, but you may have the opportunity to watch appellate oral arguments.

## 2. STATE COURT INTERNSHIPS

Opportunities to intern for state court judges exist at the courts of appeals and trial court levels. State court internships offer an excellent opportunity to develop solid legal skills and make connections in the legal community. They are often particularly beneficial for students who wish to work in prosecution, defense, or in certain areas of state law (e.g. family law, criminal law, torts).

Contact information for state court hiring personnel from around the country is listed in the Vermont Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures, which is available online at <http://www.vermontlaw.edu/careers/judicial-clerkship-guide>. The Vermont Guide is password protected. Please contact the CDO to obtain the username and password. While the Vermont Guide is geared towards post-graduate clerkship hiring, the contact

information included within the guide can be utilized to inquire regarding internship hiring at the state court level.

#### **IV. SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING FLORIDA STATE COURTS**

##### **1. 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 intern exist both with the individual justices as well as with the Central Staff Office. These semester-long internships are located at the Court in Tallahassee.

Students interested in interning for the Florida Supreme Court should apply through the Florida Supreme Court Internship Program for Distinguished Florida Law Students. Applications for the Program are solicited for the fall, spring and summer semesters. The Court requires students to submit a character and fitness clearance letter from the Florida Board of Bar Examiners in order to apply. For more information regarding the Florida Supreme Court in general, please visit <http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/index.html>.

##### **2. FLORIDA DISTRICT COURTS OF APPEAL**

Florida's intermediate courts of appeal are known as the "district" courts of appeal (which is opposite of the federal system, where the trial courts are known as the district courts and the intermediate appellate courts are known as the circuit courts). There are five such districts that are headquartered in Tallahassee, Lakeland, Miami, West Palm Beach, and Daytona Beach.

Most state district court judges take interns during the summers. Students should send an application via U.S. mail to the chambers of each individual district court judge to whom they would like to apply. The initial application should consist of a cover letter, resume, and unofficial transcript. The judge may request a writing sample at a later time.

Many state district court judges take interns during the academic year as well. Students should contact the judge's chambers and inquire whether the judge will be accepting applications for the desired time period/semester. The CDO will also notify students when we become aware of judges who are hiring interns.

The district courts of appeal can hear appeals from final judgments and can review certain non-final orders. The district courts have the power to review final actions taken by state agencies in carrying out the duties of the executive branch of government. The district courts also have constitutional authority to issue the extraordinary writs of certiorari, prohibition, mandamus, quo warranto, and habeas corpus, as well as all other writs necessary to the complete exercise of their jurisdiction.

As a general rule, decisions of the district courts of appeal represent the final appellate review of litigated cases. A person who is displeased with a district court's express decision may ask for review in the Florida Supreme Court and then in the United States Supreme Court, but neither tribunal is required to accept the case for further review. Most are denied. For more information regarding the Florida district courts of appeal, please visit <http://www.flcourts.org/courts/dca/dca.shtml>.

### 3. 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. The majority of jury trials in Florida take place before one judge sitting as judge of the circuit court. There are twenty circuit courts in Florida. The circuit courts are sometimes referred to as courts of general jurisdiction, in recognition of the fact that most criminal and civil cases originate at this level. Circuit courts also hear appeals from county court cases. Thus, circuit courts are simultaneously the highest trial courts and the lowest appellate courts in Florida's judicial system.

Many circuit and county court judges throughout Florida take interns. For a list of all twenty judicial circuits within Florida, please visit <http://www.flcourts.org/courts/circuit/circuit.shtml>.

Locally, within the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, students may apply for an internship by sending an application via U.S. mail to the chambers of each individual judge to whom they would like to apply. The application should consist of a cover letter and resume. For a complete list of the circuit and county court judges in Miami, please visit: <https://www.jud11.flcourts.org/About-the-Court/Judges/Judicial-Directory>.

Finally, some circuit court staff attorney offices may also offer opportunities for law students to intern (the Eleventh Judicial Circuit in Miami, however, does not take interns). The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit in particular runs a structured and very well received summer internship program in which interns work under the General Counsel, and are supervised directly by the court's Staff Attorneys. Applications for that Program are typically made available in late January and are due by early March. If you are selected for an interview with the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit please contact Karen Warren in the CDO so that she may assist you in preparing for the interview.

## V. WHEN DO I APPLY?

The below table lists the suggested timetable for applying to the various judicial internships described above, in addition to a few others. Please note that these timelines are approximate and may vary from judge to judge.

<b><u>Court/Program</u></b>	<b><u>Approximate Application Timing</u></b>
<b>U.S. Circuit Courts</b>	<b>Varies</b> (few federal appellate court judges accept interns). At a minimum, follow the timeline set forth below for U.S. District Courts.
<b>U.S. District Courts</b>	<b>Summer – Apply December/January</b> (some judges prefer that 1Ls wait until spring grades are released, while others will begin reviewing applications and interviewing students before grades are released. Ask your CDO advisor for the preferred timing guideline for each judge.) <b>Fall – Apply April/May</b> <b>Spring – Apply September/October</b>
<b>Florida Supreme Court Internship Program for Distinguished Florida Law Students</b>	<b>Summer – Apply February</b> <b>Fall – Apply April</b> <b>Spring – Apply September</b>
<b>Florida District Courts of Appeal</b>	<b>Summer – Apply December/January</b> (some judges prefer that 1Ls wait until spring grades are released, while others will begin reviewing applications and interviewing students before grades are released. Ask your CDO advisor for the preferred timing guideline for each judge.) <b>Fall – Apply June</b> <b>Spring – Apply September/October</b>
<b>Florida Circuit and County Courts</b>	<b>Summer – Apply February/March</b> <b>Fall – Apply July</b> <b>Spring – Apply December/January</b>
<b>Summer Judicial Internship Diversity Project. Nationwide internship program.</b>	<b>Deadline is in January.</b>
<b>The ABA’s Section of Litigation Judicial Intern Opportunity Program</b>	<b>Summer – November (2Ls) and December (1Ls)</b>

## **VI. HOW DO I APPLY?**

In addition to the various application processes discussed above, in general, students can also contact the judge's chambers to inquire whether interns will be hired for the desired semester/year. The suggested timing for those calls is listed in the above table. Contact information for federal and state appellate court judges is available in the Judicial Yellow Book and on court websites. See Appendix 1 for a list of online judicial directories.

## **VII. STEP BY STEP PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING TO MULTIPLE JUDGES**

Every semester the CDO sends out an Excel spreadsheet with the contact information for all of the federal and state appellate court judges in South Florida (Miami, Ft. Lauderdale and West Palm Beach) who hire interns. The spreadsheet contains all of the information needed in order to address cover letters and envelope address labels to judges. In order to save time in preparing your cover letters and envelope address labels, you can utilize Microsoft Office's Mail Merge tool. The Mail Merge tool will ask you to select a "data source" for the information to be merged into your document (i.e. cover letter or label). You can use the CDO's Excel spreadsheet as your data source.

The following is a step-by-step approach to creating an Excel spreadsheet data source when you will be applying to multiple judges outside of the South Florida area:

1. Use the **Clerkship Module in Symplicity** to select the judges to whom you will be applying by checking the box next to their name (you will be required to complete a short registration to gain access to the Clerkship Module). To access the Clerkships Module, click on the "Clerkships" tab at the top of the page
2. Create "Favorites" lists for the different types of judges you will be applying to – i.e. "Federal District Judges," "Federal Magistrate Judges" and "State Appellate Court Judges" – and export each of the lists as an Excel spreadsheet. You can export the data by clicking the boxes next to the judges' names and then clicking the "Export to Excel" button at the top of the list of judges. At that point Excel will open and offer you the option to open or save the Excel spreadsheet.
3. Save each of these separate spreadsheets within the same workbook (you can name them by left clicking on the tab on the bottom of the page). Separating the types of judges into different spreadsheets will allow you to tailor the text of the cover letter to that particular type of judge. The CDO offers students a "template" spreadsheet/data source to use, which ensures that the spreadsheet is properly formatted. Please contact your CDO advisor if you need a copy of the template spreadsheet.
4. Once you have exported the data, delete the columns on the right-hand side of the spreadsheets so that "Last\_Name" is the final column in each of the spreadsheets. Save and close the Excel workbook.

5. Write your cover letter (see below for information regarding how to draft and properly format your cover letter). After you have written and saved your cover letter in Word format, click on the “Mailings” tab at the top of the page. Select “Start Mail Merge” and “Step by Step Mail Merge Wizard” at the bottom of the list. The Mail Merge Wizard will then walk you through the process of how to format your mail merge.
6. If you are applying to different types of judges with specifically tailored cover letters (i.e. federal district, federal magistrate, state appellate), then repeat step 5 for each type of judge.

## VIII. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

Listed below are the documents typically required when applying for judicial internships. The CDO recommends that you submit your applications in large, sealed envelopes with pre-printed address and return address labels.

### 1. COVER LETTER

The judge and/or his or her staff (including present clerks) will probably read your cover letter before they get to your writing sample. Therefore, *your cover letter is your first writing sample*. A letter that is poorly organized or contains typographical errors will reflect poorly on you as an applicant. Because a large number of students apply for these positions, a sloppy cover letter will undoubtedly weed you out. Review the addressee format guidelines in Appendix 2 and the cover letter sample in Appendices 3 and 4 when preparing your letter to judges.

A cover letter should contain a maximum of three to four paragraphs and should fit on one page. The cover letter should identify precisely who you are and the semester/year of the internship you are seeking. You should identify what has motivated you to seek an internship and what qualities make you a particularly attractive candidate, such as research/writing skills, membership on a particular law review, exceptional academic performance, or even a connection to the locality or judge. Keep in mind that judges look for strong analytical skills, excellent writing, and proofreading skills. If you have prior work experience, you can also delineate any skills you learned from those and indicate how those skills would be applicable to an internship. Finally, you should indicate the application materials that you have enclosed and thank the judge for his/her consideration.

### 2. RESUME

The CDO’s general resume guidelines apply to judicial internship applications. You should list your GPA if it is over a 3.0 and **emphasize your prior research and writing experience, both legal and non-legal**. Please review the sample resumes contained in the CDO’s Resume Guide and email your resume to your CDO advisor for review prior to sending your resume to judges.

### 3. TRANSCRIPT

It is usually perfectly acceptable to send judges an unofficial copy of your transcript. To do so, simply cut and paste your course and grade information from Cane Link into a PDF document. In rare instances, a judge might ask to see a copy of your undergraduate transcript, in which case you may send a copy of your final undergraduate transcript. If you are a 1L and are applying for a summer internship prior to the release of fall grades, then you may consider including a copy of your unofficial undergraduate transcript as well.

\*Please note that state court trial judges (circuit and county) typically do not require transcripts.

### 4. WRITING SAMPLE

The ideal writing sample resembles a judicial opinion: It presents a set of facts, sets forth some principles of law, and applies the law to the facts to arrive at a reasoned conclusion. In many cases your writing sample will consist of memorandum or brief prepared in your L-Comm class, a Moot Court brief, or a memorandum that you may have prepared during your summer employment. Ideally, the writing sample will be between 8 and 15 pages in length, double spaced. Writing samples outside of this range are acceptable, but the further you deviate from it, the more you risk that the judge will not get an appropriate sense of your writing skills or will not read your entire sample.

It is imperative that you submit *your work* as a writing sample. Memos or briefs that have been co-written with a partner, or heavily edited by journal staff members or employers, may not be used as a writing sample. Each writing sample should be accompanied by a cover page explaining (a) the sample's original purpose (e.g., a legal writing class assignment; a moot court brief; an internal memorandum for an employer; a court pleading); (b) when and for whom the sample was written; (c) the extent of editing by any third party; and (d) if the writing sample is an excerpt from a larger document, the nature of that larger document, including issues addressed. See Appendix 5 for sample writing sample cover pages.

Before using any work that *you* have done for an employer, be sure to clear with the employer that your work can be submitted for this purpose. If you choose to use a document produced for a real client, you must identify the steps taken (e.g., redactions; changed names; consent obtained from a client or an employer) to preserve the confidential or privileged nature of the document. Ultimately, concerns about confidentiality or considerations of counseling or litigation strategy may make it inappropriate to use the document as a writing sample, even if the document is available as a public record. Finally, it is also inappropriate to use a document filed in a case then currently pending before the court in which the internship is sought.

\*Please note that state court trial judges (circuit and county) typically do not require writing samples.

## IX. INTERVIEWS AND OFFERS

### 1. INTERVIEWS

In anticipation of being called to interview with a judge, make sure that your voicemail message sounds clear and professional. If a judge requests an interview, make yourself available as soon as you possibly can. When scheduling your interview, try to obtain as much information as possible regarding the interview, including the expected length and exactly with whom you will be interviewing. It is not uncommon to interview with the judge's clerk(s) in addition to the judge. In fact, some judges have their clerk conduct the initial round of interviews or leave the interviewing entirely to their clerks. Therefore, use extra care to be courteous, accommodating and professional in all of your dealings with the judge's staff. The judge's assistant, courtroom deputy, law clerks, etc... are all interviewing you each and every time they interact with you. Remember this: *while staff cannot necessarily ensure that you get hired, they certainly can ensure that you DO NOT get hired.* Once you have scheduled your interview, you should immediately sign up for a mock interview with a CDO advisor.

During the interview, the judge may ask you questions relating to why you went to law school, why you want to intern for a judge, what courses you have enjoyed most or least during law school or why you chose a particular topic on a paper submitted as a writing sample. Accordingly, you should always be prepared to discuss, in depth, anything included in your resume, cover letter or writing sample. You should also prepare a list of questions for the judge and clerks ahead of time. See Appendices 6 and 7 for lists of sample interview questions.

To prepare for the interview, you should read some of the opinions that the judge has written and have a sense of the judge's basic writing style. You also should know the basics: when the judge went on the bench, who appointed him/her, other biographical information, and the nature of the judge's docket. Use the judicial resources listed in Appendix 2 to find out biographical and other pertinent information about the judge. Especially helpful in preparing for interviews with judges are Courtlink on LexisNexis and the *Almanac of the Federal Judiciary* on Westlaw.

Dress as you would for a law firm interview. Bring extra copies of your resume, writing sample, and transcript with you. You may also want to prepare a list of references in case the judge asks for them. This list should include the reference's name, address, email address and phone number. Be sure to ask for permission to use someone as a reference, and to give out that person's phone number, before including him/her on your list. After the interview, be sure to send thank you notes to the judge and anyone else who interviewed you. You should send these notes within 24 hours of completing the interview.

## 2. OFFERS

Unlike many law firms, judges do not expect to wait very long for a decision on an offer. Some judges demand an immediate answer while others give you some time to think it over. **As a general rule, you should accept a judge's offer immediately rather than ask for time to consider the decision.** Usually, judges who are inclined to give you some time to consider the offer will tell you that up front. Once you accept an offer to intern, your decision is final. It is extremely bad form for you to renege on the acceptance. If you accept an offer to be an intern, you should withdraw your pending applications with other employers. For judges with whom you have interviewed (or with whom you are scheduled to interview) but who have not yet gotten back to you with their decisions, you must immediately call their chambers, say how honored you were to have been considered, but report that you must withdraw your applications because you have accepted another offer.

## APPENDIX 1 – JUDICIAL RESOURCES

In-depth research will help you make a more informed decision on which judges to apply to for internships. The following are available either online or in the law school or CDO libraries:

### **Alliance for Justice**

<http://www.afi.org/our-work/issues/judicial-selection>

Includes judicial vacancies and reports on gender and race of judges nationwide.

### **Almanac of the Federal Judiciary (In Law Library and on Westlaw)**

Volume 1: Profiles of U.S. District Court Judges

Volume 2: Profiles of U.S. Court of Appeals Judges

Contains biographical information, including publications, noteworthy rulings and lawyers' evaluations on all federal judges.

### **Federal Judicial Center**

[www.fjc.gov](http://www.fjc.gov)

This website contains biographies of federal judges, landmark judicial legislation, topics of judicial history and historic courthouses.

### **Federal Judiciary**

[www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov)

Links to court websites and general information. Also, note Judicial Milestones at <http://www.uscourts.gov/judges-judgeships/judicial-milestones> provides recent nominations, confirmations and resignations.

### **The Federal Lawyer Magazine**

<http://www.fedbar.org/Publications/Copy%20of%20Judicial-Profile-Index.aspx>

Requires membership to Federal Bar Association to gain access to judicial profiles. Contains an archive of "Judicial Profiles" of federal judges throughout the country. The profiles are usually written by the judges' law clerks or others who know the judge well, and thus they are useful for learning "insider" information about judges. Contact Karen Warren in the CDO if you would like to learn more about obtaining access to the site.

### **The Federal Magistrate Judges Association**

<http://www.fmja.org/>

The Federal Magistrate Judges Association is a national association consisting of United States Magistrate Judges.

### **Judicial Yellow Book**

Available in hard copy in the CDO. Includes contact information for all federal and state appellate court judges, as well as some state trial court judges, as well information regarding judges' law clerks.

## **LexisNexis and Westlaw**

### ***Judicial Appointments and Nominations:***

Lexis contains an extensive library of legal and non-legal trade papers, magazines and newspapers and is an excellent source of articles about a particular judge, court, or case. It is particularly helpful in finding information on newly appointed or nominated judges. West Legal Directory offers office profiles and profiles of individual full-time judges from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

### ***Judicial Legal Writings (Aside from Opinions):***

Search the U.S. Law Reviews and Journals, Combined database.

### ***Judicial Opinions:***

Lexis and Westlaw allow a researcher to find opinions written by a specific judge.

## **National Center for State Courts**

<http://www.ncsc.org/>. See also <http://www.whohascourtjobs.com>, a publication from the National Center for State Courts with state-by-state listings of support staff and staff attorney jobs.

## **The Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures**

<http://www.vermontlaw.edu/careers/judicial-clerkship-guide>

This Guide, published by the Vermont Public Interest Action Project, Vermont Law School, includes current information regarding application procedures, timing, salary and hiring process in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The website is password protected. Please contact the CDO for the username and password.

## **APPENDIX 2 - ADDRESSING YOUR COVER LETTER**

To properly address your cover letters, use the following as a guide:

### **FEDERAL COURTS**

#### **Chief Judge, Courts of Appeals**

#### **Judge or Senior Judge, Courts of Appeals**

Address:       The Honorable [Full name]  
                  Chief Judge [where applicable] or Senior Judge [where applicable]  
                  United States Court of Appeals  
                  for the [Nth] Circuit  
                  [Address, with zip code]  
Salutation:   Dear Judge [Last name]:  
Close:         Respectfully,

#### **Chief Judge, District Courts**

#### **Judge or Senior Judge, District Courts**

Address:       The Honorable [Full Name]  
                  Chief Judge [where applicable] or Senior Judge [where applicable]  
                  United States District Court  
                  for the [Southern, etc.] District of [State]  
                  [Address, with zip code]  
Salutation:   Dear Judge [Last Name]:  
Close:         Respectfully,

#### **Magistrate Judge, District Courts**

Address:       The Honorable [Full Name]  
                  United States Magistrate Judge  
                  [Address, with zip code]  
Salutation:   Dear Judge [Last Name]:  
Close:         Respectfully,

Follow similar format for Chief Judges and Judges on other Federal Courts

### **STATE COURTS \*Court names may vary state by state**

#### **Chief Justice, State Supreme Court**

Address:       The Honorable [Full Name]  
                  Chief Justice of the  
                  Supreme Court of [State Name]  
                  [Address, with zip code]  
Salutation:   Dear Chief Justice:  
Close:         Respectfully,

**Justice, State Supreme Court**

Address: The Honorable [Full Name]  
Justice of the Supreme Court of [State Name]  
[Address, with zip code]

Salutation: Dear Justice [Last Name]:

Close: Respectfully,

**Chief Judge or Judge, State Court of Appeals**

Address: The Honorable [Full Name]  
Chief Judge [where applicable]  
Court of Appeals for the State of [State Name] \*This is applicable where the  
[Address, with zip code] highest court in the state is

Salutation: Dear Judge [Last Name]: the Court of Appeals.

Close: Respectfully,

**Chief Judge, State Intermediate Appellate Court (District Court of Appeal in Florida)**

Address: The Honorable [Full Name]  
Chief Judge  
[State Name] [Nth] District Court of Appeal  
[Address, with zip code]

Salutation: Dear Judge [Last Name]:

Close: Respectfully,

**Judge, State Intermediate Appellate Court (District Court of Appeal in Florida)**

Address: The Honorable [Full Name]  
[State Name] [Nth] District Court of Appeal  
[Address, with zip code]

Salutation: Dear Judge [Last Name]:

Close: Respectfully,

## APPENDIX 3 - SAMPLE COVER LETTER

### TO BE USED AS A GUIDE ONLY

[INSERT YOUR ADDRESS]

January 20, 2020

The Honorable Melanie R. Newman  
United States District Court  
for the Eastern District of Florida  
100 Clerkship Way, Room 12-6  
Clerky, Florida 33000

Dear Judge Newman:

I am a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law and am very interested in obtaining an internship in your chambers for the summer of 2020. I hope to work as a judicial intern in order to learn broadly about the law and to hone my legal writing and research skills.

As noted in my resume, I graduated *cum laude* from the University of Florida with a degree in International Business. I honed my writing, editing, researching, and investigating skills through numerous papers and a final thesis. The final thesis required extensive research of a multi-national organization, its operations, successes, and failures in the global marketplace. My academic experiences have taught me to work both effectively and diligently within strict deadlines. My enjoyment of research and writing has continued with my legal education at the University of Miami, where I earned an A in my first-semester Legal Communication and Research Skills course.

Prior to law school, I interned at the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office assisting an Assistant State Attorney in the Felony Division. I also volunteered at the Neighborhood Legal Services Program, where I assisted attorneys who represented indigent clients in landlord/tenant cases. Both of these experiences helped solidify my desire to pursue a legal career. I would welcome the opportunity to put my research and writing skills and prior work experience to use in your chambers.

I have enclosed my resume and transcript for your review and I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you in greater detail. Should you wish to schedule an interview please contact me at [sblack@gmail.com](mailto:sblack@gmail.com) or (305) 111 -1111. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Susan Black

Enclosures

**APPENDIX 4 - SAMPLE COVER LETTER SHOWING LOCATION TIES**

**TO BE USED AS A GUIDE ONLY**

[INSERT YOUR ADDRESS]

December 15, 2019

The Honorable Melanie R. Newman  
United States District Court  
for the Central District of New York  
100 Clerkship Way  
Clerky, New York 33000

Dear Judge Newman:

I am a first-year student at the University of Miami School of Law interested in obtaining an internship in your chambers for the summer of 2020. I was born and raised in New York and plan to return there for the summer. Upon my graduation from law school, I hope to settle in New York permanently, and would very much welcome the opportunity to work in the legal community there this summer.

I graduated *magna cum laude* from George Washington University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History. My undergraduate coursework allowed me to develop critical thinking skills, and strong research and writing abilities. In addition to excelling academically, I also served on the Executive Cabinet of the Student Association for two years. I was honored to receive a scholarship in recognition of my leadership in ensuring that students have access to resources to support physical and mental health issues.

Prior to law school, I gained extensive practical experience as an intern for a charitable foundation. There, I researched and reviewed applicants and published several newsletters and an annual report. I enjoy the creative process involved in analyzing issues and producing written work product. I am confident of my ability to successfully meet the demands of a fast-paced and diverse working environment as a judicial intern in your chambers.

Enclosed please find a copy of my resume and a writing sample. My first semester grades from law school are not yet available, but I will forward my transcript to you as soon as it has been released. Thank you in advance for considering my application.

Respectfully,

Susan Black  
Enclosures

**APPENDIX 5 - SAMPLE WRITING SAMPLE COVER PAGES**

**[Sample format where writing sample has not been excerpted]**

**SUSAN BLACK**

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1234 Isle Drive, Apt. 205, Miami, FL 33133 • sblack@gmail.com • (305) 111 -1111

**WRITING SAMPLE**

I prepared the attached memorandum while working as a summer associate at Smith and Smith. The memorandum examines whether the fees charged by commercial tax preparers for “instant refund loans” violates the state usury laws in Florida, Georgia or Alabama.

To preserve client confidentiality, all individual names, locations and other identifying facts have been changed. I have received permission from the firm to use this memorandum as a writing sample. The writing sample is in its original format and has only minimal grammatical edits after review by my supervising partner.

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**[Sample format where the writing sample has been excerpted]**

**SUSAN BLACK**

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1234 Isle Drive, Apt. 205, Miami, FL 33133 • sblack@gmail.com • (305) 111 -1111

**WRITING SAMPLE**

The following Memorandum of Law in Support of Defendant’s Motion for Summary Judgment was the final assignment in my first year, second semester legal writing course. I earned an “A” on the memorandum. The memorandum is my own work product and has not been substantially edited by any other person.

In its original format, the memorandum is 25 pages long. For the purpose of serving as a writing sample, and as a means of reducing its length, this submission includes only the Introduction, Sections A and C of the Argument, and the Conclusion, so that the memorandum is now 15 pages long. A copy of the original memorandum, in its entirety, is available upon request. (If you received an “A” in the course, you can include that as well.)

**APPENDIX 6 - SAMPLE QUESTIONS A JUDGE OR CLERK MIGHT ASK DURING  
A JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP INTERVIEW**

- What do you hope to gain from a judicial internship?
- Why do you want to intern for me/Judge \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- Why do you want to intern for the (district, magistrate, bankruptcy, etc.) court?
- Do you enjoy writing?
- What is your writing style?
- What is your research strategy?
- What are your plans after graduation?
- Why do you want to intern in this city, state? To which other judges have you applied?
- What qualities do you possess that make you an attractive candidate?
- What are some of your favorite law school courses?
- What areas of law interest you?
- Why did you go to law school?
- What do you believe is the role of a judge?
- What do you believe is the role of a judicial intern?
- What do you do for fun?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What did you write about for your law review/journal topic? Why did you choose that topic?
- Tell me about your work experiences.
- Do you like working independently or with others?
- Can you impartially draft an opinion even if you disagree with the holding or reasoning?

## **APPENDIX 7 - SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK THE JUDGE OR CLERKS DURING A JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP INTERVIEW**

- How is a typical case handled from start to finish?
- How involved are the interns in preparing drafts of the Judge's opinions?
- What other documents do interns draft?
- Do interns assist in administrative work or other projects for the Judge (e.g. judicial conference committee work, writing speeches or articles, preparing materials for classes taught by the Judge)?
- Do interns have the opportunity to observe court proceedings?
- How much time is spent working in chambers versus in the courtroom?
- What is the size of the docket? What types of cases are on the docket? Do certain types of cases predominate? (Note: this information is available for many federal courts on LexisNexis' CourtLink.)
- How is the work divided among the clerks and interns?
- How much interaction does the Judge have with the interns?
- How much opportunity is there for the Judge to discuss the cases and the law with the interns?
- What is the timing for extending offers?

## **APPENDIX 8 - FORMER LAW CLERKS AMONG OUR LAW FACULTY**

### **FACULTY MEMBER**

### **COURT**

David Abraham	U.S. Court of Appeals – Third Circuit
Jill Barton	Florida Third District Court of Appeal
Ricardo Bascuas	U.S. District Court – Southern District of Florida
William Blatt	U.S. Court of Appeals – D.C. Circuit
Sergio Campos	U.S. Court of Appeals – First Circuit U.S. District Court – District of Massachusetts
Kathleen Claussen	U.S. Court of Appeals – First Circuit U.S. District Court – District of Massachusetts
Charlton Copeland	Constitutional Court of South Africa U.S. Court of Appeals – Sixth Circuit
Caroline Mala Corbin	U.S. Court of Appeals – Fourth Circuit
Andrew B. Dawson	U.S. Court of Appeals – Third Circuit U.S. Bankruptcy Court – District of Delaware
Michele DeStefano	U.S. District Court – District of Massachusetts
Andrew Elmore	U.S. District Court – Eastern District of New York
Marc Fajer	U.S. Court of Appeals – Ninth Circuit
Zanita Fenton	U.S. District Court – Eastern District of New York
Michael Froomkin	U.S. Court of Appeals – D.C. Circuit U.S. District Court – Northern District of Illinois
Michael Graham	U.S. District Court – Southern District of New York
Patrick Gudridge	California Supreme Court
Stanley Langbein	U.S. Court of Appeals – Fifth Circuit

Caroline Bettinger-López	U.S. District Court – Eastern District of New York
Martha Mahoney	U.S. Court of Appeals – Ninth Circuit
JoNel Newman	U.S. Court of Appeals – Eleventh Circuit
Scott Rogers	U.S. Court of Appeals – Eleventh Circuit U.S. District Court – Northern District of Florida Florida Supreme Court
Laurence M. Rose	U.S. District Court – District of Vermont
Keith Rosenn	U.S. Court of Appeals – Second Circuit
Andres Sawicki	U.S. Court of Appeals – Second Circuit
Stephen Schnably	U.S. Court of Appeals – Third Circuit
Rachel Stabler	U.S. Court of Appeals – Eleventh Circuit
Scott Sundby	U.S. Court of Appeals – Eleventh Circuit
Marcia Narine Weldon	Supreme Court of New Jersey
William Widen	U.S. Court of Appeals – First Circuit