



2017 Judicial Clerkships Handbook

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Introduction

A judicial clerkship, whether at the state or federal level, is one of the best ways to begin your legal career. Clerkships provide the opportunity to participate in the inner workings of a court, refine your research and writing skills, connect with a multitude of attorneys and judges, and play a role in shaping legal precedent in your jurisdiction.

This handbook is intended to assist you with the judicial clerkship application process. The application process is not complicated, but it does require thought, some research, and careful planning. This handbook will address some of the most common questions related to judicial clerkships, but should be used as a reference guide in conjunction with regular communication with the Office of Career Planning the faculty Judicial Clerkship Committee. The OCP and Cleveland-Marshall's Judicial Clerkship Committee are here to assist you in all aspects of your judicial clerkship job search.

Timeline for Applying for Clerkships

Federal Judicial Clerkships

The majority of federal court judges advertise their available clerkships on and accept applications electronically through OSCAR, a database maintained by the Administrative Office for the US Courts. Access OSCAR at <https://oscar.uscourts.gov>.

Students are granted access to OSCAR on July 1 following their first year of law school. At that time, all interested rising second-year students may register for an account in OSCAR to start researching judges, identifying recommenders, and reviewing and applying to available clerkship and staff attorney positions.

Almost all judges hire clerks at least one year in advance; for instance, a judge with an opening beginning September 2018 may begin accepting applications and even extend an offer as early as January 2017. This is why interested students are advised to start applying in the summer before their 2L year, and to continue applying through the rest of law school. Not all judges hire so far in advance, though, so regular research of available opportunities is very important.

State Judicial Clerkships

States vary widely in their judicial clerkship hiring practices. Some state courts choose to hire career clerks rather than term clerks, meaning available opportunities are often few and far between. Perhaps the best resource for detailed state-level hiring information and timelines is *The Guide to State Court Judicial Clerkships*, published annually by Vermont Law School, and accessible through the Symplicity Resource Library.

The highest court in each state generally hires at least one year in advance, as do many of the intermediate courts of appeals. County and local level state courts more frequently hire on shorter timelines of one to six months in advance.

Should I Apply for a Clerkship?

Many students do not fully understand the role of a judicial law clerk and, as a result, wonder why they are being encouraged to pursue a clerkship as the starting point in their legal career. Law clerks do not simply type and file for judges. They may assemble pleadings, motions, and

evidentiary materials for the judge before trial or oral argument; provide questions to ask the attorneys during oral argument; research and provide quick answers to pressing evidentiary issues during trial; research and draft legal memoranda; interact with counsel; and draft the judge's final opinion.

Main Advantages of a Clerkship

Educational value. A clerkship is an educational experience unlike any other. A clerk experiences law in action from the perspective of the judge, and can observe the manner in which the judge reacts to the lawyers, briefs, and arguments. This provides invaluable insight into what makes a good lawyer, a persuasive brief, and an effective oral argument. The value of critical advocacy skills learned through most clerkships cannot be overstated. Also, because clerks work on a random group of cases, they become familiar with a wide array of legal issues. Clerks in both trial and appellate courts do a great deal of research and writing, often under time pressure. The experience is worthwhile simply because it presents a unique opportunity to hone these essential skills.

Mentoring. Many judges view their relationship with their law clerks as part supervisor and part mentor. Senior Law Clerks, if present, also frequently develop mentoring relationships with newer clerks. The career advice and connections to the local (and sometimes national) legal community that judges can offer are frequently unmatched in any particular legal market.

Better informed career choices. Many students are undecided about what path within the law to pursue; a clerkship provides experiences that enable a more informed decision about subsequent career opportunities. For example, if you are considering a career as a trial attorney, a trial court clerkship will provide you with invaluable information about trial practice. Exposure to many different cases and practice areas during a clerkship may help you discover a previously unrealized enthusiasm for a particular area of the law.

Credential value. A clerkship is a highly valued credential in virtually all legal markets. The weight a clerkship carries in the job market is not simply a function of how difficult it is to obtain; the experience itself is generally recognized to be an intensive and unique training experience. For those who are considering a career in legal academia, a clerkship tends to be a particularly important credential.

Networking. Clerks frequently become members of an extended family of former and future clerks for that judge. It is not unusual for former clerks to maintain regular contact with one another and with the judge. Your co-clerks may well become your good friends for life. Clerking, particularly at the trial court level, also introduces you to many local attorneys. This is especially valuable if you plan to practice in the same city in which you clerk.

Main Costs of a Clerkship

Opportunity costs (time and money). A clerkship is a commitment of at least one year of your life, and some federal judges require a two-year commitment. Clerkship salaries, while competitive in the public sector, are lower than the entry-level salaries paid by many private sector employers. Fortunately, recent changes to laws regarding repayment of federal student loans provide recent graduates with many more choices for balancing their preferred career path with their loan repayment obligations.

Compatibility Issues. Your enjoyment and the professional benefits of a clerkship depend very much on the relationship you have with your judge. The judge's personality and work style preferences will set the tone for any clerkship. Detailed research of judges and strategic questions during interviews will help you determine whether a judge's personality is a good fit for you.

Determining Target Courts & Judges

You've decided that you want to pursue judicial clerkship opportunities, but how do you identify what courts and what judges? Creating that target list will result largely from your responses to a few very important questions:

- Do you want a clerkship in a trial court or an appellate court?
- Do you want to be in a federal court or a state court?
- Are there particular practice areas of interest to you, such as bankruptcy, tax, or business, which are the subjects of specialty courts?
- Are you willing to relocate for a minimum of one or two years?

Trial Court vs. Appellate Court

Both trial and appellate clerkships generally involve extensive legal research, analysis, and writing. However, the form that a clerk's work takes, the schedule to which the clerk must adhere, and the collateral duties and atmosphere of the job may be quite different.

Trial court clerks generally perform a wide variety of litigation-related tasks, often on a time-sensitive basis. A typical job description for a trial court clerk might read: Research and draft memoranda on a variety of motions, including recommendations for disposition; attend hearings and trials; conduct settlement and scheduling conferences; research and draft trial memoranda, opinions and orders; advise and assist judge during trial; write jury instructions; perform record-keeping and administrative tasks; and interact with attorneys and witnesses. The types of cases before the judge will vary and be driven by many factors, including the jurisdiction and the docket to which the judge is assigned.

Appellate court clerks generally focus on research and writing. A typical job description for an appellate court clerk might read: Research and draft memoranda on issues raised on appeal, including questions for oral argument; assist with preparations for oral argument; attend oral arguments; and draft the final opinion, a dissent, or a concurring opinion according to instructions from the judge. An appellate court clerk may be asked to consult with clerks in other judges' chambers regarding various cases, arguments or proposed opinions. Appellate court clerks will generally read more briefs and do more intensive research and writing than their counterparts at trial courts, but they will rarely, if ever, deal with counsel or litigants.

State Court vs. Federal Court

State Courts. Most of the legal matters in this country are handled at the state, and not the federal, level. The state courts resolve most contract and tort disputes, criminal prosecutions, divorce and custody matters, and the probate of estates. The Ohio Supreme Court, like many state supreme courts, runs the state judicial system and regulates the state bar. States have trial courts and a hierarchy of appellate courts. **There are many, many great clerkships to be found in state courts – do not neglect to research this area!** State court systems vary in terms of their jurisdiction, caseload, employment of law clerks, etc. That said, almost every state has a three-tier judicial system – trial courts, intermediate appellate courts, and the highest appellate court. Most states have a mixture of term judicial clerks – those serving for only one or two years – and career clerks who are hired for an indefinite period of time. Researching how clerkships are distributed in your target states will be critical to ensure you are applying in the proper way at the right time.

Federal Courts. Clerkships exist at every level of the federal judicial system, from the courts of general jurisdiction to the specialty courts such as Bankruptcy, Tax Court, Federal Claims, etc. Viewed by many as more competitive and more prestigious than state court clerkships, federal

clerkships are almost always for either a one-year or a two-year term. While all federal clerkships are competitive, those in the “Big Five” cities of New York, Washington, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago generally receive the highest ratio of applications to available clerkship opportunities. Because of the relative prestige of federal judicial clerkships, students are strongly encouraged to look to cities outside the Big Five and to consider clerkships in areas of the country that may be more rural. It’s also important to consider factors such as how many law schools are located in the geographic region of the clerkship, where the judge’s chambers are located (which is not always the same location in which oral arguments are heard), and the judge’s reputation.

A Note on Magistrate Judges. Federal magistrate judges perform a variety of judicial tasks upon the referral of district judges, and are subject to the supervision of the district court judges. Magistrate judges commonly conduct bail hearings, hold preliminary examinations, review search and arrest warrants, and decide pre-trial motions. They also commonly have significant civil responsibilities such as conducting settlement conferences, managing pretrial matters in complex cases, holding hearings, issuing reports and recommendations and supervising discovery; in some jurisdictions, they may also conduct trials. The amount and type of responsibilities will differ significantly by jurisdiction. If you are considering a clerkship with a magistrate judge, you should thoroughly research the types of matters referred to the judges. Magistrate judges generally hire one clerk for a one-year term.

A Note on Staff Attorneys. Many appellate courts, both state and federal, employ lawyers as “staff attorneys.” These attorneys serve as law clerks for all of the judges on the court or bench, which is why they are often called “bench clerks,” and often assist in the screening and pre-oral argument stages of the appellate process. These positions are searchable in OSCAR.

Considering Specialty Courts

United States Bankruptcy Courts handle individual and business reorganization and insolvency matters. Clerks are exposed not only to bankruptcy law and procedure, but also to many types of legal claims that can be made against the debtor. Each federal district has a Bankruptcy Court, and each bankruptcy judge generally hires one clerk.

United States Court of Federal Claims consists of sixteen judges and is authorized to hear primarily money claims founded upon the Constitution, federal statutes, executive regulations, or contracts with the United States. Many cases before the court involve tax refund suits and government contracts. In recent years, the court has also heard many cases that raise environmental and natural resources issues. Another large category of cases involves civilian and military pay claims. In addition, the court hears intellectual property, Indian tribe, and various statutory claims against the United States by individuals, domestic and foreign corporations, states and localities, Indian tribes and nations, and foreign nationals and governments.

United States Court of International Trade has jurisdiction over tariff conflicts, international trade and customs law questions, and hears appeals from the United States International Trade Commission (which investigates and issues rulings concerning unfair practices in import trade). The Court has nine sitting judges.

United States Tax Court hears taxpayer appeals involving income, estate, and gift taxes.

United States Court of Military Appeals is a civilian court in which three civilian judges review court martial convictions.

United States Court of Veterans Appeals reviews decisions of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Administrative Law Judges are hired for each federal administrative agency. Currently, the federal government employs 1,150 judges in 28 administrative agencies; these judges hear cases pertaining to their particular agency and almost all hire at least one law clerk.

Building Competitive Applications

Plan Ahead & Maximize Your Credentials

It's no secret that judicial clerkships at all levels are very competitive. The typical federal district court judge receives 200-500 applications for clerkships each year. Federal appellate court judges receive even more applications. The sheer volume of applications received means that judges, by necessity, have to use certain criteria to cull the pile of applicants. For some judges, it's where a candidate went to law school, who their recommenders are, or service on a law review. For others it's work experience, language skills, or some other quality or trait. Because of this, the importance of being strategic about who you apply to and how you draft your applications cannot be overstated.

While there will always be certain factors beyond your control that may affect your clerkship chances, there are several things you can do during law school to develop competitive clerkship credentials:

- **Complete a Judicial Externship.** An externship provides a preview of the clerkship experience, conveys to a judge your interest in a post-graduate clerkship, and starts developing your professional network of judges and clerks who can later serve as recommenders and offer their own advice for your applications. Many students credit their externships with helping them obtain full-time clerkships.
- **Build relationships with potential recommenders.** A clerkship application generally requires three letters of recommendation, and most judges place considerable weight on these letters when evaluating applications. A strong recommendation from a person who truly knows you and your qualifications will add significantly to the strength of your application. Get to know your professors; consider working as a research assistant for one or more. Develop mentoring relationships with supervisors at your internships and externships. Build these relationships long before you seek a recommendation.
- **Pay attention to your writing sample.** Clerks are writers, so the importance of your writing sample cannot be overstated. Review all your previous legal writing for the sample that is the best example of your legal analysis and writing skills. Then read through it again to ensure it is 100% error-free. Cite-check again and otherwise review for accuracy and currency (especially if the sample is more than one year old) and revise and update as needed. If you choose to use something written while working for an employer, be sure to get that employer's permission and complete any required redactions.
- **Join a journal.** Journal experience, while not absolutely necessary to secure a clerkship, certainly helps. Many judges look favorably on Law Review or other journal experience.
- **Gain legal research and writing experience.** If you cannot secure a legal-related summer job between your first and second year, try to find one that at least requires you to do some

writing. Many students have reported that writing experience – of any type – was an important factor in their success of obtaining a clerkship.

- **Choose your courses carefully.** Some judges prefer candidates who have taken (or plan to take) particular courses, such as Evidence, Employment Law, Employment Discrimination, Federal Courts, Criminal Procedure or Trial Advocacy (especially for trial courts).
- **Always be professional.** Perhaps it goes without saying, but always – in every situation – be the consummate professional. Be prepared for and engaged in class. At work, be diligent, trustworthy, and proactive. Cultivate your reputation as a hard-working professional.
- **Plan ahead.** Whether you plan to apply for one or one hundred clerkship positions, the process takes time. Do yourself a favor and plan ahead. You can research judges, update your resume, draft a cover letter, polish your writing sample, and approach potential recommenders long before you submit your applications.

Be Strategic

Geographic flexibility will – more than any other factor – increase the likelihood that you will get a clerkship. Understand that judges with a connection to Cleveland-Marshall may be excellent prospects. Judges who graduated from Cleveland-Marshall or who have had former clerks from the law school may have preferences for Cleveland-Marshall applicants. Applying only to such judges, however, will necessarily limit your chances of obtaining a clerkship. Remember that judicial clerkships typically last for one or two years. If you have flexibility to accept a clerkship anywhere in the country, you should consider not limiting yourself to the Cleveland area when applying for clerkships.

Target your search. Aim for clerkships that are within reach based on the credentials the judges request and the advice you receive from the faculty. But remember that certain factors may give your application a competitive boost. A recommendation could generate interest even if your other credentials are not as strong as those of other applicants.

Understand that the process is idiosyncratic. Some judges prefer students who attend a particular law school; others prefer students with certain writing, clinical, or moot court experience and are more flexible regarding the law school the student attended. Some judges prefer applicants who went to the judge's college, who have military experience, who grew up in the same town, or who share the same hobby or interest. Some judges provide detailed information about their preferences while others do not. Research judges as thoroughly as you can – educated targeting can make the difference between sending one hundred applications with no success or sending fifty or fewer with great results. But understand that you may never have complete information as to what characteristics or credentials a particular judge prefers.

Many of the judges on the federal district court in Cleveland have connections with Cleveland-Marshall. For example, Chief Judge Oliver was previously a professor at the law school, Judge Gwin regularly teaches a sentencing course at the law school, and Judge Polster regularly teaches a mediation course at the law school and serves on our National Advisory Council. Thus the judges of the Northern District of Ohio are particularly aware of Cleveland-Marshall's history and success in producing excellent graduates and superb judicial clerks. That said, it is always a good idea to apply to judges in a broad geographical area to maximize your chances of landing a clerkship.

Tips for Specific Courts

Supreme Court of Ohio. The Supreme Court of Ohio has seven justices, each of whom hire several law clerks. Some of the justices hire “career” law clerks – a long-term, permanent position. Other justices hire clerks for one or two year terms. Some of the justices of the Court are Cleveland-Marshall graduates. The Court does not have a centralized clerkship application process – each justice hires clerks as she or he desires, and on varying schedules. The Office of Career Planning and the Clerkship Committee tries to keep updated on when justices are hiring. In addition, if you are interested in applying, you can send an application directly to each justice. Better yet, call each justice’s chambers and inquire about clerk hiring.

Intermediate Appellate Courts. Most (but not all) states have intermediate courts of appeals. Ohio’s courts of appeals are divided into twelve districts. The Eighth District is located in Cleveland and covers appeals from Cuyahoga County. Judges on the Ohio courts of appeals also hire law clerks, again with a mix of career clerks and one or two year term clerks. In Ohio, applications for Courts of Appeals clerkships should be sent to the Court Administrator for each District of interest.

Trial Courts. All states have trial courts, but not all of them provide for law clerks. Many Cleveland-Marshall students extern for local trial court judges. After graduation, some trial courts such as the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court and Probate Court hire staff attorneys. Staff attorney positions are typically long-term rather than term-limited positions. In Ohio, apply directly to the Court Administrator for the counties of interest.

United States Supreme Court. The nine active justices hire a total of 35 clerks for one-year terms. These clerkships are extremely difficult to obtain. A student should apply for these clerkships during the fall or winter of the last year law school (or thereafter). The justices usually require that their clerks have clerked for at least one year in a federal court of appeals, but on rare occasions take clerks from other courts. If you are interested in pursuing a Supreme Court clerkship, talk with a member of the faculty Clerkship Committee about the best strategies for maximizing your chances.

United States Courts of Appeals. There are thirteen different federal courts of appeals, including the Federal Circuit, D.C. Circuit, and First through Eleventh Circuits. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, located in Cincinnati, has jurisdiction over most federal appeals arising from Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Sixth Circuit judges with chambers in or near Cleveland include: Judge Karen Nelson Moore (Cleveland), Judge Alice M. Batchelder (Medina), Judge Deborah L. Cook (Akron), Judge R. Guy Cole, Jr. (Columbus), Judge Jeffrey S. Sutton (Columbus), and Senior Judge Alan E. Norris (Columbus). Most appellate judges hire three to four clerks usually for one-year clerkships, but some for two-year terms.

There is a hierarchy among circuit court clerkships based upon a number of factors, including the attractiveness of the location in which the judge or court sits (an appellate judge’s chambers may not be located in the city where the court hears oral arguments), the number of law schools in a given area competing for local clerkships, and a particular judge’s reputation as a jurist or “feeder” to the Supreme Court. The hardest-to-get clerkships are those with the D.C. Circuit, the Second Circuit, and the Ninth Circuit, and scattered judges with the other circuits.

Generally, clerkships for federal appellate court judges in the middle of the country are less difficult to obtain than clerkships on the east and west coasts. To secure a federal appellate court clerkship other than the hardest-to-get ones, one generally needs good grades and enthusiastic

recommendations. Writing experience always helps, as will experience as an intern in a judge's chambers during law school or a previous federal court clerkship.

United States District Courts. There are ninety-four federal court districts; the district courts serve as the trial level of the federal court system. Each federal court judge generally hires two to three law clerks. Most hire for one-year clerkships, but an increasing number require a two-year commitment, and a few hire permanent or career clerks. Do not discount or ignore federal district court judges (or judges from any court) who have taken senior status. Many senior status judges still have fairly active dockets and can provide some of the best clerkship experiences.

The difficulty of securing a federal district court clerkship depends upon the reputation of the judge and the location. Thus, a really good district court judge in Toledo, Ohio, will receive many fewer applications than a pedestrian judge in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, San Francisco, or Chicago (the Big Five cities). You probably have a better chance of obtaining a clerkship if you apply to judges in smaller cities, or even to big cities outside the Big Five.

Applying for Clerkships After Graduation

One little-known fact is that many judges hire clerks who have practiced as attorneys for one or more years prior to their clerkships. Many judges value practical experience, and some believe that legal practice experience prior to a clerkship improves a clerk's legal judgment and professional maturity. With these judges, your chances of securing a clerkship will increase if you wait until after you graduate to apply.

Additional Considerations

Employment of Non-Citizens

Pursuant to the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2000, Public Law No. 106-58, section 605 (September 29, 1969), any judicial employee assigned in the continental United States compensated with federal funds must be a United States citizen or otherwise eligible for federal employment within the United States. A non-citizen of the United States may be employed by the federal judiciary to work for courts located in Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands and Hawaii.

If you have specific questions about whether or not you are eligible you may call and address your questions to the Office of General Counsel, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, 202-502-1100.

Background Checks

Since law clerks are "sensitive" employees as defined by the Judicial Conference of the United States, individuals employed as law clerks may be subject to a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check. It is not unheard of that some judges look for top security clearances and ask applicants whether or not they feel they would pass such a clearance if offered a job. These judges may impose such requirements because they handle national security oriented cases.

The Nuts & Bolts of Finding and Applying to Clerkships

You can research most federal clerkship opportunities on OSCAR. However few state courts publicly announce judicial clerkship openings. This means that you will have to contact the OCP, the court itself, or perform your own research and networking to determine the opportunities at

most state courts. On the one hand, this makes applying to state clerkships much more cumbersome and time consuming. On the other hand, it means that state judges receive far fewer clerkship applications than federal judges. If you put in the time to find out which state judges are hiring, your chances of obtaining an interview are correspondingly higher. The same is true of most specialty federal courts, which generally do not list clerkship opportunities on OSCAR.

In any case, you should speak to the OCP and the Clerkship Committee when you decide to apply for clerkships to get a starting point for your research!

How do I Apply for a Clerkship?

To apply for a clerkship, you will need to put together your clerkship application package and solicit strong letters of recommendation. A clerkship application package generally consists of a resume, cover letter, law school transcript, letters of recommendation, and one or two writing samples.

Judges vary greatly as to whether they accept electronic applications or require applications to be sent through the U.S. Mail. Please be sure you carefully review all application instructions to verify that you are submitting your application properly and completely. Pay particular attention to instructions regarding letters of recommendation and whether they should be sent with the rest of your application materials or directly by each recommender.

The Clerkship Interview Process

Given the competitiveness of the selection process and the desire of most judges to limit the number of students they interview, most applications do not result in interviews. When you do get a call for an interview, though, there are a few very important things to know.

Scheduling. If and when you do get calls from judges for interviews, timing is a critical consideration. Generally speaking, judges do not interview everyone, make offers, and then wait indefinitely for you to decide which of a number of offers you will take. Many judges will hire as they interview, thus closing you out if you wait too long to schedule an interview.

If you are applying to several judges in the same city or general area, and one judge requests an interview, you might contact the other chambers to notify them of your interview and ask whether those judges would be interested in seeing you as well. Often they will be. Indeed, they may give your resume another look simply because Judge X is interviewing you. This is called leveraging and you can often use it to your advantage.

Offers. Some judges might ask you to decide on an offer on the spot while others may give you only a short amount of time to make a decision. Many will not permit you to shop your offer by telling other judges that you have received it; they may ask you not to disclose your offer to anyone.

Balancing the Chaos. Because of these unique attributes of judicial clerkship interviews and offers, you should have a clear sense about your preferences in clerkships before you even submit your applications. Unfortunately, you cannot control which judges will call or when, but you can attempt to order your interviews according to your preferences. Be aware, however, that this can be risky.

For example, if you get a call from your third choice, and schedule that interview for a week hence in hopes that judges one and two will call and interview you in the interim, you risk the possibility that judges one and two will not call and that judge three may complete his hiring before seeing you and cancel your interview. If, on the other hand, you schedule judge number three immediately and he makes you an offer, you are likely going to have to accept or reject that offer before hearing from judges one and two.

Many students in the throes of this process find these choices exceedingly difficult and stressful. Our advice is to do the best you can and then relax. You cannot control the process; all you can do is try to manipulate it. Keep in mind that you will probably love any clerkship you accept – indeed, having done your research in advance, you can be fairly certain that you will.

Preparing for the Clerkship Interview

Conduct one or more mock interviews. Do NOT practice on a real judge. As soon as you are awarded an interview, contact the OCP or a member of the Faculty Clerkship Committee and schedule a mock interview with a professor or alum.

Budget accordingly. Interviews occur in judges' chambers and travel expenses are not reimbursed. Some judges may be willing to conduct interviews by telephone. If you are already planning to travel to any particular judge's city, be sure to tell the judge of your travel plans and your availability to interview either in your cover letter or in a subsequent telephone call to the judge's chambers.

Know the judge. The best tip in preparing for an interview is to know your judge. You can do this by consulting texts such as *The Almanac of the Federal Judiciary* and *The American Bench* for biographical information. You can search online for the judge's most recent cases and decisions. Be familiar with the judge's recent or important decisions and cases and be prepared to discuss them. Find out if the judge has written any law review articles and read them. If possible, speak to individuals who know the judge. Professors or Cleveland-Marshall alumni who have clerked or interned for the judge are excellent resources, as are current clerks or interns.

Anticipate the questions. Prior to an interview, develop a list of questions that you will ask the judge and clerks. Develop a second list of questions you think the judge might ask and think through your possible responses.

Confirm the logistics. Twenty-four hours before the interview, confirm the date, time, location, and duration of the interview with the judge's secretary or clerk. Make sure you are polite and courteous over the telephone and in person.

Arrive early, calm, and prepared. Arrive early for the interview. Bring with you extra copies of your resume, transcript, and writing sample. An interview can last anywhere from 15 minutes to three hours. Typically, the interview will consist of a one-on-one session with the judge as well as a session with the current clerks. Be courteous and deferential. Be aware that you are being evaluated, sometimes more stringently, by the clerks. Also, enjoy yourself. You are meeting with interesting people who like you on paper. At this point it is a question of fit, for both you and the judge. Do not assume that anyone in the judge's chambers is unimportant to your interview. Very often, even the secretaries and chambers administrators are called in afterward to give their opinion of you.

Send a thank you letter. Immediately after the interview, write a thank you letter to the judge. If you have not heard from the judge several weeks after the interview, you might want to call chambers and inquire as to the judge's timeline.

Keep the OCP informed of your pursuit. If you accept a judicial clerkship, please notify your counselor in the OCP. Your responsiveness to us enables us to help future applicants.

Additional Resources

The Office of Career Planning and the Cleveland-Marshall Law Library offer a variety of resources to support the judicial clerkship application and interview process.

In the CareerConnect Resource Library, these resources include:

- The current edition of the *Guide to State Judicial Clerkships*
- *Clerkships with Administrative Law Judges*
- Links to a variety of online judicial clerkship resources
- Listings of previous C-M Law judicial clerks and current C-M Law faculty who were judicial clerks
- Link to the C-M Law Library Research Guide *Researching Lawyers and Judges*

In the Cleveland-Marshall Law Library and/or the Office of Career Planning Reading Room:

- *Behind the Bench: The Guide to Judicial Clerkships*, by Debra Strauss
- *Federal District Court Law Clerk Handbook*, by Calvert Chipchase
- *Judging: A Book for Student Clerks*, edited by Louis J. Sirico, Jr.
- *Judicial Clerkships: Legal Methods in Motion*, by Aliza Milner
- *Law Clerk Handbook: A Handbook for Law Clerks to Federal Judges*, edited by Sylvan A. Sobel

Final Considerations

Pursuing post-graduate judicial clerkships at any level is a competitive and time-consuming process. But talk to any current or former judicial law clerk and they will tell you it was the best job they ever had; the experience is well worth the effort.

As a final word of advice, don't travel the road alone. Utilize the services of the Office of Career Planning and the assistance of the faculty Judicial Clerkships Committee. We are here to assist, advise, and make the road a little bit smoother.