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

Students interested in applying for state clerkships must research the hiring practices of judges in each state.

The majority of information on this handout will pertain to judicial clerkships in Pennsylvania. Resources containing detailed information about clerkship applications in state courts, including Pennsylvania, include:

* Duquesne University School of Law Guide to Judicial Clerkships Handbook (Available in the Career Services Office.)

* Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures, by the Vermont Law School. Links to the websites for each state court system can be found in this resource. (Access via DuqLawConnect - “Shortcuts” section.)

* Insight and Inside Information for Select State Court Clerkships, by the NALP Judicial Clerkship Section. (Available on DuqLawConnect - Resources tab.)


* The Career Services Office created a database that includes the names and mailing addresses of many members of the Pennsylvania judiciary. This document was created to assist students with targeted mailings for judicial internship or clerkship positions. (Available on DuqLawConnect - Resources tab.)

In many instances, judges in Pennsylvania will not post their judicial clerkship openings. Students must take the initiative to submit applications directly to the judges with whom they are interested in clerking.

Absent a job posting with a specific deadline, there are no steadfast application deadlines for these positions in Pennsylvania. Student applicants should apply for clerkships in Pennsylvania’s Supreme Court, Superior Court, and Commonwealth Court in the spring of the 2L year (2D, 3P or 3E), and applications to Courts of Common Pleas should be submitted by the fall of the 3L year (3D, 4P or 4E).

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

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

Apply to only those judges from whom you are prepared to accept an employment offer. When a judge selects his or her law clerk among numerous applicants, the judge assumes that the offer will be accepted immediately. Failing to do so could adversely impact your professional reputation and that of future applicants from Duquesne University School of Law.

Applicants are encouraged to have their application documents reviewed by the Career Services Office prior to submitting them. Sample resumes and cover letters are available in The CSO Handbook (available at www.duqlawblogs.org/cso).

Candidates are encouraged to do a mock interview and to review the list of questions that are typically asked during a clerkship interview, which can be found in the Appendix of The CSO Handbook.