

PAPER CLERKSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

The following step-by-step instructions have been written to support 2Ls who are planning on submitting applications to federal judges throughout the 2018-19 academic year.¹

Applicants will use the “Clerkships” tab in the [B-Line](#) to generate a list of the judges to whom they will be sending paper applications. This database contains the mailing address information for all federal judges and is regularly updated by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. You will export this list to an Excel spreadsheet, follow our exact formatting instructions (see pg. 5), and then send your list to Eric Stern in the CDO.

REMEMBER - Your paper judge list should not contain any judges who have indicated in their OSCAR profile that they require or accept on-line applications. More information on this point and specifically how to interpret OSCAR postings can be found below.

The data in your paper judge list will be used by Faculty Support Unit (FSU) assistants to create mail-merged copies of recommendation letters that will contain individualized judge address and salutation information. The letters will be signed and inserted into sealed envelopes that will show the judge’s name and address information in a clear envelope window. We will email you when those letters are ready and you can pick them up in the CDO. You will then insert those letters into your complete paper application packets and mail them out (see Appendix 1 of the Clerkship Guide for a paper application checklist). When you need more paper recommendation letters, you must follow the same protocol.

LETTERS FROM INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT AFFILIATED WITH BERKELEY LAW

Paper Letters. We do not have the capacity to support the customization and processing of paper letters from your outside recommenders. It will be entirely your responsibility to obtain an original letter from your outside recommender that ideally should be on her or his employer’s letterhead, dated, signed and addressed to “Dear Judge:” so that we can use it for all of your applications.

PDF and Word copies of that letter must be emailed to Eric Stern.

Letters for your on-line applications. Eric will support the processing of on-line letters from your outside recommenders (see pg. 5 of the [OSCAR Quick Guide](#) for more info).

STATE COURT JUDGES - If you are planning on applying to state court clerkships, please see the section entitled “State Court Judges” in the Clerkship Guide for advice on how to determine when individual courts are hiring and their specific application requirements. If those courts require recommendation letters, we would advise you to manually add these judges to your Paper Judge List. **(State court judges do not participate in OSCAR).**

¹ 3Ls and Alums must also follow these instructions in order to obtain paper recommendation letters from recommenders associated with Berkeley Law. If you need a B-Line alumni account, please send your request to us at career@law.berkeley.edu.

HONOR CODE REMINDER: Remember, it is a violation of the Honor Code for you to open the faculty recommendation letters that we will be making available to you in sealed envelopes. If for some reason you do not end up using any of the faculty recommendation letters we have prepared for you, please either return those letters to the CDO for shredding or make arrangements to shred those letters on your own.

BUILDING YOUR PAPER JUDGE LIST

- (1) Log-in to the B-Line with your CAL ID and Pass Phrase.
- (2) Click on the “Clerkships” tab.
- (3) You can begin building your judge list by either using the basic or detailed search functions, such as circuit codes or city/state search parameters.
- (4) Once you have built your judge list, you should use the “Export to Excel” feature to download contact information for judges. Save your list using a clear file name label (Student X Paper Judge List_03_15_19). It’s important to “date-stamp” your judge lists because it will help to ensure that the FSU Assistants are processing each new batch of letters as you submit subsequent paper judge lists.

NOTE: Please do your best to make each judge list as comprehensive as is possible.

- (5) Next, open up your list in Excel. You will need to eliminate a number of columns in the original spreadsheet in order for it to conform to the required Berkeley Law paper judge list template. Go ahead and delete the following fields from the spreadsheet: phone, fax, email, circuit code, district code, judge type, “Position Available in OSCAR,” OSCAR - Online, OSCAR - Paper, OSCAR - Email, and OSCAR - Fax.
- (6) Before you submit your paper judge list to Eric Stern, however, you will need to make a good faith effort to verify the hiring information for all of the judges in your spreadsheet.
- (7) OSCAR is the authoritative resource you should be using to research clerkship vacancies. (If you have not yet set-up your account in OSCAR, please see our [OSCAR Quick Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions). You should **NOT** search for clerkship hiring information in the B-Line’s Clerkship Database - that resource should be used **ONLY** for the purpose of building your paper judge list (once you have used OSCAR to verify which judges are hiring and in what format they require applications). Be sure to sign up for email alerts in OSCAR so that you are notified of new openings in your targeted jurisdictions. Before you begin using OSCAR to research clerkship vacancies, here are a couple of items to keep in mind.
- (8) **Judge is Hiring Only for 2021 Term and/or requires clerkship or post-graduate legal experience:** Before you submit applications to those judges who are only hiring for the 2021 (or 2022!) term, be sure to think carefully about whether you are definitely willing to commit to a clerkship this far out and whether it would work personally and

professionally. Be mindful particularly of those judges who express either very strong preferences or requirements - such as that applicants must be 3Ls or experienced attorneys; or those circuit court judges who require that an applicant first complete a district court clerkship. For example, if you are very interested in and competitive for a 2021 term clerkship with a circuit court judge who expresses a strong preference for applicants who will be coming directly from a district court clerkship - go ahead and apply - as long as you are geographically flexible, willing to hustle and network, and work closely with Eric Stern and your advocates on landing a 2020 term district court clerkship.

- (9) **Judge Full for 2020 Term - No Info about 2021 Hiring:** If a judge has indicated in OSCAR that she is full for 2020, but has not provided any info about her 2021 term hiring plans - you can submit a paper application to her chambers (but with the caveats expressed in #8).
- (10) **Judge No Longer Hires Term Clerks.** Some judges - including a handful that have been on senior status for a considerable period of time - may no longer hire term clerks - something that may be denoted in their OSCAR profile. You should not submit an application to any of these judges.
- (11) **OSCAR Tip Sheets & Video Tutorials.** When you are ready to begin doing your searches in OSCAR, we would strongly recommend reviewing the well-written OSCAR Tip Sheets and Video Tutorials, both of which can be found under the “Resources” tab on your home page. You might want to start with the [Applicant Prep Kit](#). And you should refer back to the master list of OSCAR Tip Sheets should you encounter any other challenges as you begin building your on-line applications (for those judges who require or accept them).
- (12) Remember, every federal judge has an OSCAR account - but not all federal judges’ chambers provide updated information about their hiring plans.
- (13) To make this guidance more concrete, I did a search on Augusts 24, 2018 of the 29 Article III District Court Judges in the Central District of California. (**Please don’t rely on my search results as judges frequently update their hiring information**).

Judges who have posted positions. Chief Judge Virginia Phillips, for example, has one 2020 term clerkship position listed. As of August 24, 2018, this position was still available. If it was no longer available and the judge’s chambers had updated their OSCAR profile, you might see in OSCAR that the position is now labeled as “Filled” or “Expired.” You do not want to submit paper applications to judges who have positions that are listed as either “Filled” or “Expired.”

Chief Judge Philips has also indicated that she is currently accepting applications for this position and will continue doing so through January 1, 2020. And you can also see that she accepts paper or online applications (which means that you will apply online since that is the default application method when a judge accepts both paper and online applications; it’s also the quickest way to send an application because on-line applications are released to chambers as soon as they are finalized and because it takes very little time for FSU Assistants - with proper

notice from you - to fulfill recommendation requests in OSCAR). In order to find out more information about the position and Chief Judge Phillips' hiring preferences, you will need to click on her hyperlinked last name.

First, you will want to visit her "Judge Details" tab. This will provide you with additional information, including (assuming the judge's chambers has filled it out) how many term and/or career clerks they have.

Now, in order to find out more, you should click on the "Clerkship List" tab. Once there, click on the "View and Apply" tab under "Options." This is the place where the judge's chambers may have provided more specific information about the clerkship itself (e.g., post-graduate experience required/preferred, practice-area expertise sought, etc.). It is also the place - for those judges like Phillips who accept or require on-line applications - where you will begin the process of building your on-line application. (See our [OSCAR Quick Guide](#) for step by step instructions on how to build your on-line applications).

As you can see from the Judge Details tab of Chief Judge Phillips' available 2020 term clerkship position description, she has provided additional information on what she is looking for in an ideal candidate.

Email Applications. If a judge **ONLY** accepts email applications, you should proceed as follows. Put together your application materials in one single PDF document. Include in your email the names of your recommenders and to the email addresses to which applications should be sent along with any other specific instructions of which I should be aware. I will add customized recommendation letters to the packet and email it to chambers. Requests to email applications to judges who accept paper applications or on-line applications in OSCAR WILL be rejected.

Judges who have not posted positions - but have hyper-linked last names and hiring information in their Judge Details tab. Take Judge Fairbank (in the Central District of California), for example. When you click on her last name and review the information in her Judge Details tab, you see that she does not hire term clerks anymore. Therefore, you should not send her an application.

(14) Once you have verified the hiring information (to the best of your ability), you are ready to put your list into its final format. We have provided a [sample paper judge list template](#) to give you a sense of what your list should look like when you are done making the following formatting changes.

(15) Then, you will want to go ahead and create two new fields for insertion at the beginning of your spreadsheet: Column A – Applicant Name and Column B - GRAD YR.

(16) **Once you have deleted the extraneous columns (i.e., those not included in the sample paper judge list template; see #5)** and added the new required columns referenced in #15, you will sort each of the worksheets by the "Last_Name" field. (See the [paper judge list template](#) for guidance).

- (17) You should then email this clearly labeled Excel file (e.g., Last Name_First Name_Paper Judge List_03_15_18) to Eric Stern. **That email (and every subsequent judge list email) must include the names of your faculty recommenders. Not including this information will delay the processing of your paper recommendation letters.**
- (18) **If your judge list deviates from the above format, you will be asked to reformat and resubmit your file.**
- (19) If your judge list was formatted properly, Eric Stern will instruct the FSU Assistants to begin processing your letters.
- (20) We will email you when your letters are available for pick-up in the CDO!