

SUMMER JOB SEARCH TIPS

SUMMER HIRING TIMELINE

As a general rule, the larger the employer, the earlier that employer will interview and hire students for its summer positions. Large law firms, federal and state government agencies, corporations, and a few public interest organizations can anticipate their hiring needs one year in advance and, consequently, can complete most of their hiring in the fall. Small- and medium-size employers tend to hire their summer clerks in the spring and early summer.

While keeping the timeline in mind, it is important not to leave your summer job search to the last minute.

Finding summer legal opportunities:

- Search the Career Services' website, especially Symplicity and legal job links.
- Check the websites of interesting organizations to see if they have summer jobs listed. Use the Westlaw Career resources as well.
- Try Google or another search engine—type in “legal summer jobs New York City,” for example.
- Tell people about your job search. Family, friends, people from your hometown, Law School faculty and students for advice, ideas, information, or contacts.
- The Career Services Resource room and the Law Library have many publications and directories that list legal organizations. If some are of interest to you, write them with a cover letter and resume.

Remember, not all summer legal jobs are advertised

Many, if not most, will be found by networking and directly contacting organizations.

Assess what you have to offer a summer employer or internship sponsor

Courses you've taken, activities you've enjoyed, and other positions you've held, all add up to skills and interests you can emphasize on your resume, in your cover letter, and in an interview.

Write a resume that markets your skills and interests

To get started, consult the Career Services handout, “Resumes.” Bring your draft to Career Services.

Arrange informational meetings with alumni and others in your fields of interest

Ask them about their work, how they got started, and what kind of summer experience they think would help you explore the field. Use Alumni Finder in the Alumni section of the Law School website. **Distribute your business cards** and get other people's cards as well. Begin your legal network and stay in touch with contacts. **Important:** Always send a thank-you note or email after your informational interview.

Research firms or legal organizations before contacting them

Browse their website and search Westlaw for anything that may have appeared in the news. Ask alums or others in the field about the organization. This will help you both in writing a cover letter and in interviews.

Phone or email your target organizations first to find out to whom to send your resume

Get the name and title of the person who heads up your specific interest area, if possible.

Follow up

Follow up by phone (unless an ad says “No calls, please”) to reiterate your interest and find out the next step. While you don’t want to overdo it, you do want to keep your application on the top of the employer’s pile.

Practice your interview skills

Read Career Services’ handout, “Interviews.” Schedule a practice interview with a counselor. Always send a thank-you note or email after your interview.

When in doubt, apply anyway

If your experience doesn’t exactly match an employer’s requirements, but you think you would make a good candidate, apply anyway. Stress the skills and experience you do have, rather than what you lack.

Consider temping over the summer

Most cities have temporary employment agencies, listed in the Yellow Pages or online, which place applicants in short-term positions. Some agencies specialize in legal positions. It’s helpful to register with a temp agency in advance of when you wish to work.

Alternatives to getting legal experience over the summer

Before you graduate, be sure to have some legal experience, whether it is over the summer or during the academic year. Western New England University School of Law provides externship, internship, clinic, and moot court opportunities. *Career Services strongly recommends you take part in these programs to gain practical experience.*