



United States District Court, Northern District of New York
100 S. Clinton St.
Syracuse, NY 13261
www.nynd.uscourts.gov

Announcement Number: 25-DC-20

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Position: Term Law Clerk

Grade Level/Salary: Grade 11 (\$73,939) - Grade 13 (\$105,383). Placement above step 1 is based on previous federal service and highest previous rate rule. Final salary setting based on review and approval of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. (See Qualification Requirements for experience required for each grade level)

Status: Full Time

Opening Date: June 27, 2025

Closing Date: August 18, 2025 or Until Filled (applications will be considered on a rolling basis)

Projected Start Date: Early October 2026

Projected End Date: Early October 2028

Introduction: The United States District Court for the Northern District of New York is seeking a term law clerk for the Honorable Mitchell J. Katz, U.S. Magistrate Judge in Syracuse, New York. Employment as a term law clerk may continue up to, but may not exceed, four years. Any prior service as a federal term judicial law clerk counts toward the four-year lifetime limit. This position is a two-year term appointment. Judge Katz believes strongly that working in his Syracuse chambers provides a better experience. He will however also consider an applicant's preference for full-time telework on a case-by-case basis, especially for applicants who possess significant relevant work experience. Applicants are asked to state such a preference in their application materials.

Summary of Representative Duties and Responsibilities: Reviews legal submissions; performs legal research; prepares proposed decisions and draft opinions, particularly in connection with prisoner civil rights cases, prisoner habeas corpus petitions, Social Security Disability appeals, and other civil actions, including pro se civil lawsuits; and drafts jury instructions and orders addressing a wide variety of issues arising in civil litigation. Assists with case management through the Case Management/Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF) system. Performs administrative office functions such as editing, proofreading, telephone communications and written correspondence. A law clerk works cooperatively with other members of the judge's staff in order to effectively support the judge in fulfilling his or her judicial responsibilities.

Qualifications: To qualify for the position of judicial law clerk, an individual must be a law school graduate (or be certified as having completed all law school studies and requirements and merely awaiting conferment of degree) from a law school of recognized standing, and have demonstrated one of the following accomplishments or proficiencies:

- Standing within the upper third of the law school class from a law school on the approved list of either the American Bar Association or the Association of American Law Schools;
- Experience on the editorial board of a law review of such a school;
- Proficiency in legal studies that, in the opinion of the appointment judge, is the equivalent of one of the above. Some examples of criteria that are considered to be acceptable as equivalent include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - ▶ Publication of a noteworthy article in a law school student publication or other scholarly publication; or
 - ▶ Special high-level honors for academic excellence in law school, such as election to the Order of the Coif; or
 - ▶ Winning of a moot court competition or membership on a moot court team that represents the law school in competition with other law schools; or
 - ▶ Participation in the legal aid or other law school clinical program sanctioned by the law school; or
 - ▶ Summer experience as a law clerk to a federal, state or local judge or law clerk experience on a continuing basis in a private firm while attending school.

This list is not all-inclusive; the determination of an acceptable equivalence rests with the appointing judge.

Preferred Experience:

- Experience as a federal judicial intern with significant writing assignments, or
- Post-graduate legal work
- Experience with civil rights litigation (42 U.S.C. § 1983), Social Security appeals, and/or federal discovery practice.

Legal Work Experience: Legal work experience is progressively responsible experience in the practice of law, in legal research, legal administration, or equivalent experience received after graduation from law school. Major or substantial legal activities while in military service may be credited, on a month-for-month basis whether before or after graduation, but not to exceed one year if before graduation.

The table below shows the number of years of legal work experience required to qualify for appointment as a law clerk at the applicable JSP grade level. Please note that appointment to a JSP-12 or above requires that the candidate be a member of the bar of a state, territory, or federal court of general jurisdiction.

JSP Grade Level	Years of legal work experience	Bar Membership Required
11	0	No
12	1	Yes
13	2	Yes

Additional Information: Applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible to work in the United States. Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including an FBI fingerprint and criminal records check. Unsatisfactory results may result in termination of employment. The Federal Financial Management Reform Act requires direct deposit of federal wages. The individual selected for this position must sign up direct deposit for payment of salary.

Employees are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees, which is available to applicants upon request. Employees of the United States District Court are Excepted Service Appointments. Excepted Appointments are “at will” and can be terminated with or without cause by the Court.

The Court provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please notify human resources. The decision on granting reasonable accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Benefits: Employees of the United States District Court are not included in the Government’s Civil Service classification. They are, however, entitled to the same benefits as other federal government employees. These benefits include the following based on the term of position:

- Participation in a federal health insurance program of your choice.
- Participation in federal dental and vision plans if appointment is for 90 days or more.
- Participation in a group life insurance program.
- Participation in a long-term care insurance program.
- Participation in a flexible spending account for medical and/or dependent care expenses on a pre-tax basis.
- Paid federal holidays, paid parking, student loan forgiveness, telework and on-site fitness facility.

Application Process: Individuals interested in being considered for this position are asked to submit: (1) a letter of interest; (2) resume, (3) writing sample (no more than 20 pages), unofficial law school transcript, and (5) at least two letters of recommendation (for post graduate applicants, at least one recommendation must be from a professional source) and a completed AO-78, Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment, using the Online System for Clerkship Application and Review (OSCAR) at [Oscar.uscourts.gov](https://oscar.uscourts.gov).

If you fail to provide the required documents, your application package may be considered incomplete and may not be considered. Participation in the interview process will be at the applicant’s own expense. The Court will not pay for relocation expenses. Only those applicants selected for an interview will be contacted. The United States District Court, Northern District of New York reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement; to withdraw the job announcement or to fill the position earlier than the closing date. Any of which may occur without prior written notice.

This Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer.