
1L Career Timeline

Office of Career & Professional Development
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Early Fall (August - September)

- **Before School Begins**- Read the Official Guide to Legal Specialties; check out online assessments and [this worksheet](#) to determine your core values and key strengths.
- **Get Involved**- Join student groups that personally interest you or are related to your career interests. Help plan events and take a leadership role.
- **Determine what fields interest you**- Do online research on potential fields of interest.
- **Get to know your peers**- Contact 2Ls and 3Ls who have done the kind of work you want to do.
- **Attend Career Office Programs**- particularly in the **Career Options Series**, which starts in early October, to learn about different legal fields.

Mid Fall (October - November)

- **Attend a 1L orientation** at the end of October and [other Career Office programs](#) regarding resume and cover letter drafting and online search tools. Get to know the Career Office staff.
- **Draft a legal resume and cover letter** and meet with a career counselor to review them.
- **Review summer surveys** for the inside scoop on jobs. Surveys since 2006 are available on [HastingsCareersOnline.com](#) (HCO), hard copies of prior years are in the Career Office.
- **Familiarize yourself with HCO.**
- **For large or medium-sized law firm jobs**, research employers at [nalpdirectory.com](#). Mail letters beginning December 1. Remember that firms may not talk to you prior to December 1!
- **For public interest jobs**, register on [pslawnet.org](#) and explore other sites such as [essential.org](#) and [idealist.org](#).
- **For Judicial Externships**, see the Career Office for resume and cover letter reviews. Attend the workshop in November with [Professor Nancy Stuart](#) on judicial externships. She also has information on judges in her office. (Deadlines for applying for externships are December through early February depending on the court.)
- **For Federal Internships**, review the **Government Honors & Internship Handbook** in the Career Office and on [HCO](#). Visit [usdoj.gov](#) and other government agency websites of interest.
- **For DA/PD**, visit [the Office of the Attorney General's website](#) and [prosecutor.info](#). Look for hiring guides in the Career Office's District Attorney (DA) and Public Defender (PD) binders.
- **For alternative legal careers**, come see a counselor and attend panels to explore these career options.
- **Sign up for the Alumni Mentor Program** and meet with mentors. RSVP for one of the weekly orientations on [HCO](#).

Winter Break (December)

- **Create a Contact List:** Develop a list of networking contacts, including former employers, undergraduate mentors, parents of friends and friends of parents. Use the Alumni Office, [martindale.com](#) or Martindale on Lexis to find Hastings alumni in your field of interest.

- **Join Professional Associations:** Look into student memberships in professional associations or events focusing on fields of interest to you. Attend association events and network with attorneys there.
- **Schedule informational interviews:** Meet with one or two contacts during break.
- **Create a Summer Plan:** Map out your preferred 1L Summer Plan and a back-up Summer Plan.
- **Visit a Career Counselor** for help mapping out contacts and your preferred summer plan.
- **TIP:** Start keeping a notebook and record your contacts, employers of interest, applications and interviews with follow up dates and instructions (thank you notes, referrals to others for information interviews, etc.)

Early Spring (January - March)

- **Check Job Postings:** Visit [HCO](#) for announcements and apply for relevant job postings.
- **Follow up** by phone or e-mail with employers to whom you have sent applications.
- **For Federal Internships:** Send out applications. Deadlines run early January - February.
- **For Government and Public Interest** job openings: Attend the Public Interest/Public Sector Day in early February to interview and meet the employers.
- **For Smaller Firms:** Participate in Spring On-Campus Interviews (OCI) in February - April.
- **Watch for Funding Deadlines:** Calendar Financial Aid/FAFSA priority deadlines to qualify for summer work-study. The HPILF Fellowship-Deadline is mid-Spring.
- **Attend the Career Office presentations** and employer-sponsored programs to learn more about legal fields, professionalism, and what employers expect from you.
- **Talk to professors** about possible research assistant positions for summer and approach those that could serve as references.
- **Brainstorm with the Career Office** about 1L job opportunities and strategies you may not yet have considered.
- **Schedule interviews-** both informational and job interviews for Spring Break.

Spring Break

- **Attend scheduled informational interviews** and any job interviews you arranged.
- Continue to attend **professional association events** and network with attorneys there.
- **Gather information** about the legal practice in the market(s) where you'd like to practice law.
- **Read local legal publications** (such as The Recorder and the Daily Journal available in the Career Office and the Library) to see how the legal market is in the geographic location you wish to work.

Late Spring (April - May)

- **Check job postings** on [HCO](#) and other sites and apply to any that are of interest.
- **TIP:** Some employers start advertising in May when many students have given up the search- Keep looking!
- **NB:** Most 1Ls find their summer job between March and May.
- **Attend the Fall Recruiting orientation.**

- **For IP Law:** Look for announcements for the SF Intellectual Property Law Association Career Fair (event in August; application deadline late June/early July), and the Loyola Patent Interview program (deadline in late Spring).
- Look for the **SF Bar Association Diversity Career Fair** (event in August; application deadline late June/early July) and other career fairs that happen during summer.

Summer (June - August)

- **Update your resume** to include summer work experience and Spring semester grades.
- Map out your **preferred 2L Summer Plan** and a back-up Summer Plan.
- **Research OCI employers** on [HCO](#) and apply for interviews. The **bidding window** will be in early July.
- **Watch for the [Career Office Workshops](#)** for resume and cover letter drafting and pre-screening interviews during summer.
- **TIP: For a Long Distance Job Search:** If you are out of town during the summer and wish to be back in the same area for your 2L summer, send letters to employers asking for interviews **before** you return to school.

See next page for a list of the most common 1L summer jobs.

MOST COMMON 1L SUMMER JOBS

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INTERN (generally unpaid, but sometimes paid).

Apply directly to federal government agencies, but also check out the **Government Honors and Internship Handbook** on [HCO](#) for a comprehensive list of federal internships and deadlines.

Apply January- March.

Note: Some agency deadlines (such as the FBI and CIA) are in September/October due to lengthy background checks.

IN HOUSE LEGAL DEPARTMENT INTERN (generally paid, but sometimes unpaid).

If you think you are interested in an in-house post graduate career, summer is the perfect time to investigate this option. Check out the **2010 In House Opportunities** handbook in the document library on [HCO](#) for a list of corporations known to take summer interns.

Apply: Generally January-May. Some will come to Spring OCI in March – May. Others will never post, and you need to call yourself to ask if and when they will hire.

JUDICIAL EXTERN (unpaid).

Hone your research and writing skills and develop a relationship with a judge through an externship. Judges preside over all levels of courts (local, state, and federal).

Apply: December - February for federal judges, later for state courts.

Important Dates: December 1 is the first date you may contact these employers about a summer job.

LARGE FIRM CLERK (paid).

Given the current legal market, these are highly competitive and extremely rare positions. Contact law firms directly after researching those that interest you.

Apply December – February.

Important Dates: December 1 is the first date you may contact these employers about a summer job.

PROFESSOR'S RESEARCH ASSISTANT (paid, work-study preferred).

This is a good opportunity to develop substantive knowledge of a particular field of law, and to develop a close relationship with a professor who will then be able to write a strong recommendation for you. Generally, the work is research, writing, and citation-checking.

Apply at will after talking to your professors (usually 2nd semester). Some research opportunities will be posted in the Hastings Weekly.

PUBLIC INTEREST OR PUBLIC SECTOR INTERN (generally unpaid).

If you are considering a public interest or government career, establish your community involvement record early. Seek out agencies that interest you and apply directly, but also check out PI/PS Day in February. While PI/PS Day has many local government employers and usually the military JAG, it does not have many federal agency positions.

Apply January and February.

SOLO, SMALL OR MID-SIZE FIRM CLERK (generally paid, but sometimes unpaid).

You can get a great variety of legal experience at these size firms. These positions generally will not open until spring since smaller employers cannot forecast their hiring needs as early as larger employers. Many of these firms will not post job openings, so you should seek them out early and apply directly. Some will advertise on [HCO](#) or come to Spring OCI.

Apply Feb - May.