

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS



POSITION:	Judicial Law Clerk, Term (available August 2026)
VACANCY NUMBER:	2026-01DWD
LOCATION:	East St. Louis, Illinois
SALARY RANGE:	JSP 11 (\$76,573) to JSP 13 (\$141,880), depending on qualifications*
DATE POSTED:	January 7, 2026
CLOSING DATE:	February 4, 2026, at 4:00 PM CT

* Position is promotion eligible without further competition

POSITION SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois is seeking a full-time term judicial law clerk to United States District Judge David W. Dugan. This term judicial law clerk position is for one year and may be extended upon mutual consent, but will not exceed four years as a term position. The term law clerk researches issues of law, writes extensively, attends and assists with court proceedings, and acts as advisor, making recommendations based on the law, to District Judge Dugan. The caseload in the jurisdiction is heavy, and the types of cases presented are varied, often involving novel issues of law. While the nature of the matters presented is serious, the office environment is collegial. There is daily interaction with the Judge and other law clerks and staff concerning legal and court-related issues. The successful candidate for this position will report to the East St. Louis courthouse.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Review legal submissions (such as motions, petitions, supporting and opposing briefs), research and identify issues, prepare bench memoranda, and draft orders and opinions for Judge Dugan's review in a wide variety of practice areas in both civil and criminal cases.
- Manage docket and prioritize projects to ensure that motions are briefed prior to hearing, motions are cleared in a timely manner, motions are resolved in advance of final pretrial conference or settlement conference, and cases are ready to be called out to trial (or sentencing hearing) when scheduled.
- Perform administrative functions such as editing, proofreading, docketing in electronic case filing (CM/ECF) system, telephone communications, written correspondence, and scheduling.
- Coordinate with personnel in the clerk's office, U.S. Marshals Service, and other judicial chambers to ensure efficient disposition of cases.
- Keep abreast of changes in the law.

QUALIFICATIONS

Applicant 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 approved by either the American Bar Association or the Association of American Law Schools and have demonstrated at least **one** of the following accomplishments or proficiencies:

- Standing within the upper third of the law school class;
- Experience on the editorial board of a law review of such a school;
- Graduation from such a school with an LLM degree; or
- Proficiency in legal studies that, in the opinion of the appointing judge, is the equivalent of one of the above.

To qualify for grade 12, one year of legal work experience is required; to qualify for grade 13, two years of legal work experience. With the exception of grade 11, a bar membership also is required.

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 on military duty may be credited on a month-for-month basis whether before or after graduation, but not to exceed one year if before graduation from law school.

COURT PREFERRED SKILLS

Prior experience in the federal judicial system, especially as a law clerk. Experience with electronic case filing systems, such as CM/ECF NextGen. Proficiency in Westlaw and/or Lexis. Excellent academic credentials. Superior research and writing skills. Strong organizational skills. Ability to prioritize tasks and juggle competing demands. Exceptional ability to communicate, articulate, and relate to coworkers and others with professionalism and integrity. Self motivated, able to manage multiple tasks and meet competing deadlines. Desirable qualifications include: detail-oriented, reliable, excellent oral and written communication skills, superb analytical skills, understanding of court processes, familiarity with the Federal Rules of Civil and Criminal Procedure, ability to work as part of a team, and an aptitude for working well under pressure.

BENEFITS

Judiciary employees serve under excepted appointments (not civil service). Excepted appointments are at will and can be terminated with or without cause. Judicial chambers law clerks are covered by the Judiciary Salary Plan. Optional federal benefits include health, life, and long-term care insurance, flexible spending accounts for health and dependent care, and dental and vision insurance. This position is subject to mandatory electronic fund transfer (direct deposit) participation for payment of net pay.

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION REQUIREMENTS

As a condition of employment, the selectee considered for this position is required to undergo an FBI background check. The selectee may be appointed provisionally, and retention will depend upon a favorable suitability determination of the background check.

PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING

Application packets should include the following:

- A letter of interest;
- Résumé;
- AO 78 (revised 05/24) Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment (located on the court's website at www.ilsd.uscourts.gov);

- Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three professional references; and
- One writing sample (not edited by others) limited to **no more than 10 pages**.

[Click here](#) to apply using our HR Employment Application System. Receipt will be acknowledged by the Human Resources Department via e-mail. If you do not receive email confirmation please contact Human Resources at (618) 482-9224. Any questions regarding this vacancy should also be directed to Human Resources. Application packets must be received by 4:00 PM Central Time on the closing date. Incomplete and late application materials will not be considered.

Applicants must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States. Selection will be consistent with the federal judiciary's policy to provide equal employment opportunity and to promote and facilitate diversity, equity, and inclusion in its workforce. Applicants selected for interviews must travel at their own expense, and relocation expenses will not be reimbursed.

The court provides reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities on a case-by-case basis for any part of the application or hiring process. Please contact Human Resources at (618) 482-9224 with any reasonable accommodation requests.

The Court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement or to withdraw the announcement, any of which may occur without prior written or other notice. If a similar position opens within 90 days of the closing date of this announcement, applicants under this announcement will be considered without further advertisement and competition. Employees are required to adhere to a Code of Ethics and Conduct, which is available to applicants for review upon request.

Court's Mission

Our mission is to resolve judicial matters fairly and justly in a manner that will uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States. We are committed to doing so through communication and education in order to ensure respect for the Court. We work to resolve disputes in a timely and efficient manner to promote the public's confidence and trust in the Judiciary of the United States and to protect individual rights and liberties through law.

Clerk's Office's Mission

The mission of the Clerk's Office is to provide administrative and case management support to the district court, members of the bar, the public, and all government agencies in a professional, timely, and efficient manner. Through teamwork, we perform our duties with courtesy, respect, equality, and fairness, thereby promoting public trust and confidence in the judicial system. Success is linked to commitment, and we are committed to excellence.

THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.