

Judicial Externship with the Illinois Appellate Court, Second District

The Illinois Appellate Court, Second District, is accepting applications from law students to serve as Judicial Externs for Summer 2026. The externship is an excellent opportunity for students interested in the operation of the court, appellate practice, and the development of their legal writing skills.

About the Appellate Court

The appellate court reviews cases for error based on arguments raised by the parties and handles all manner of appeals, civil and criminal. Direct appeals of final judgments entered by the circuit court to the appellate court are a matter of right under the Illinois constitution. The Second District Appellate Court is located in Elgin and hears cases on appeal from trial courts in five northern Illinois counties.

About the Externship

Externs will be assigned to one Justice and will perform legal research and record review, observe the operation of judicial chambers, attend oral arguments, prepare pre-hearing memoranda, and draft appellate orders or opinions.

Externs may be assigned to draft dispositions for pending appeals under the supervision of judicial law clerks. The appeals assigned may be resolved or unresolved, meaning externs may have the opportunity to make the initial recommendation on the outcome of a pending appeal under the guidance and supervision of a judicial law clerk. Externs may be assigned additional related tasks. The externship will hone an extern's ability to read a common law record, perform legal research, and write professionally. Externs are encouraged to ask questions and interact with the Justice and staff.

Externship Requirements

- For summer externships, preferred candidates will have completed their second year of law school (or credit equivalent) by the beginning date of the externship.
- Applicants should possess the following: excellent written and oral communication skills and organizational abilities; strong attention to detail and editing skills; ability to maintain confidentiality; ability to conduct in-depth legal research and analysis; and ability to work with appellate justices and law clerks and accept editing and other professional feedback.
- Attendance, hours and duration:
 - The externship shall begin no earlier than May 8, 2026, and end no later than August 15, 2026.
 - Total hours will be determined by your school's externship program requirements.
 - Daily office hours are flexible Mondays through Fridays between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; remote work is also required. Externs are expected to be present in judicial chambers no fewer than two days per week, with both remote and in-office hours set by the Justice and staff after periodic consultation with the extern. Time entries may be required and reviewed by the Justice and staff, regardless of your law school's timekeeping requirements.

- Externs may not hold another position that either conflicts with the work of the Appellate Court or otherwise creates an appearance of impropriety.
- Externs shall at all times comply with all policies of the Illinois Supreme Court and the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC), including but not limited to its confidentiality policy(ies), non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy(ies), and such other policies set forth from time to time by the Illinois Supreme Court, the AOIC, or the Second District Appellate Court.
- It is the policy of the Second District Appellate Court to provide a work environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, genetic information, or any other basis as provided by law; further, inappropriate or offensive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. The Appellate Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer and provides reasonable accommodation in the application process and at all other times to eligible individuals requesting such accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Openings and Application

Summer 2026 externship positions are open in the judicial chambers of Justices in the following locations [checked only]:

Libertyville ✓ - 2 openings
 Wheaton _____
 Woodstock ✓ - 1 opening

Applicants should apply **only** to those openings at locations to which they can travel at least twice per week during the externship. Occasional travel to Elgin may also be required.

- To apply, please submit the following application materials:
 - Resume
 - Cover letter (with applicant's complete address, email and telephone number)
 - Law school transcript including list of current enrolled classes
 - Legal writing sample
 - Optional: letter of recommendation (no more than 2 letters of one page or less)
- Applications shall be submitted via email, with all above-listed application materials attached in PDF format, in one of the following ways:
 - Directly to the 2nd District: tbarbacovi@illinoiscourts.gov, or
 - Only if your law school requires it or has agreed to collect and submit application materials on your behalf, you may submit your application to your school in accordance with their policies and deadlines.

Please submit only one application even if you are applying for multiple openings. Specify which opening(s) you are applying for in your cover letter.

Deadline and Important Dates

This notice of opening(s) will be distributed to Illinois law schools no later than January 15, 2026. This notice may also be posted elsewhere, at the discretion of the Presiding Justice.

Complete applications must be submitted in accordance with the above requirements no later than **Friday, February 6, 2026 at 4:59 p.m.**

Applicants selected for interviews will be notified via e-mail no later than February 27, 2026 at 4:59 p.m.; interviews of selected applicants will be scheduled by the individual Justice and/or their staff; interviews may be conducted in-person or via Zoom or telephone.

Offers to successful applicants will be extended via email no later than March 27, 2026 at 4:59 p.m. Successful applicants must accept via reply email no later than March 30, 2026 at 4:59 p.m., or will be deemed to have rejected said offer.