



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT – DISTRICT OF COLORADO

Alfred A. Arraj U. S. Courthouse

901 19th Street

Denver, CO 80294

www.cod.uscourts.gov

LAW CLERK

Vacancy Announcement #2026-36-USDC

POSITION:	Law Clerk – Term
POSITION TYPE:	Full-Time, Term Limited
SALARY RANGE:	JSP 11/1 to JSP 14/1 (\$83,265 - \$140,239) <i>Starting salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. Advanced in-step placement may be available for current or prior federal employees based on highest previous rate rules.</i>
OPEN DATE:	September 18, 2026
CLOSING DATE:	Open until filled.
AREA OF CONSIDERATION:	Open to all qualified Individuals
LOCATION:	Denver, Colorado

The U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado has an opening for a judicial law clerk (term) in the chambers of U.S. Magistrate Judge Kathryn Starnella, with a start date in early November. This term appointment is expected to last two years.

The term law clerk supports the Judge in managing an increasingly busy civil docket and juggles both administrative and substantive legal responsibilities. The term law clerk also researches legal issues, drafts judicial orders and recommendations, prepares pre-hearing bench memoranda that identify issues for the Judge and questions for the parties, and otherwise assists the Judge in preparing for and conducting discovery conferences, hearings, settlement conferences, mediations, and trials in consent cases. The term law clerk also works closely with interns, supervising their work and providing mentorship. The term law clerk also must maintain a courteous and professional demeanor within chambers, the Court, the bar, and with the public at large. Individuals who thrive in this position tend to be people who set high expectations for themselves and seek professional growth and development opportunities, rise to challenges, are intellectually curious, genuinely care about serving the individuals who utilize the court system, have demonstrated resilience and grit, and desire to develop their legal writing and analysis skills.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

To qualify for a JSP 11/1, a person 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:

- (a) 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;
- (b) Experience on the editorial board of a law review of such a school;
- (c) Graduation from such a school with an LLM degree; or
- (d) Proficiency in legal studies that, in the opinion of the appointing judge, is the equivalent of one of the above.

To qualify for a JSP 12/1, a person must meet the above but also have at least one year of full-time legal work experience after graduation from law school and must be a member of the bar of a state, territorial, or federal court of general jurisdiction.

To qualify for a JSP 13/1, a person must meet the above but also have at least two years of full-time legal work experience

after graduation from law school and must be a member of the bar of a state, territorial, or federal court of general jurisdiction.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

Judge Starnella prefers applicants who have at least one of the following:

- (a) At least two years of active federal litigation experience after graduation from law school,
- (b) At least one year of experience as a judicial law clerk for a federal district or magistrate judge,
- (c) At least one year of experience as a judicial law clerk for a state court judge with a high-volume docket (district or appellate),
- (d) Graduation in the top third of the law school class, or
- (e) Experience on the editorial board of a law journal of such a school.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Term law clerk appointments are limited to a total of four years, including all previous appointments held under a federal term law clerk capacity. Term law clerks are subject to social security deductions and are eligible for health, dental, vision, and life insurance coverage. Term law clerks are not eligible to participate in the federal employee's retirement system (FERS) or the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Based on the judge's discretion, term law clerks may or may not be placed on the Leave Act. Please visit [Benefits Overview](#) to view all federal judiciary employee benefits.

All employees must adhere to the judiciary's [Code of Conduct](#). In addition, this position is subject to mandatory fund transfer (EFT) participation, adherence to 8 U.S.C. § 1324b(a)(3)(B) regarding hiring of lawful permanent residents, and an FBI fingerprint and/or background check. Employees of the United States Courts are not included in the government's Civil Service classification and are considered "at will" employees. The Court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this vacancy announcement, or to withdraw the announcement, any of which may occur without prior written or other notice.

The judge may administer a writing exercise to finalists, to assist in the selection process.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must apply online through [OSCAR](#). Through OSCAR, each applicant should submit:

1. Cover letter;
2. Current résumé;
3. Application form AO78 (Download it [here](#)). All applicants for this position must also complete the "Optional Background Information" section of the AO78 (page 5) for consideration;
4. Two substantial writing samples that are substantially your own work, with at most minimal edits by others and certification that the samples were written without the assistance of an AI tool;
5. Law school and undergraduate transcripts;
6. Contact information for three professional references.

Incomplete applications may not be considered. Please DO NOT send any application materials to us through any other means, including in hard copy or via email. Contact our HR Division at 303-335-2494 with questions.

THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER