

Clerkship Requirement Information

Is there a clerkship requirement for individuals applying for admission?

Yes. Applicants for admission, whether by examination or on motion without examination, must serve a three-month clerkship of law office study in Vermont. There are two exceptions to the clerkship requirement:

(1) Applicants for admission by examination who have completed a four-year law office study are not required to complete any additional law office study.

(2) Applicants seeking admission under Section 7(e) (the New Hampshire/Maine reciprocal rule).

There are two options for completing the clerkship. One is for a minimum of 25 hours during a 7-day period and the other is for a minimum of 30 hours during a 14-day period. Twelve weeks are required under the first option and 24 weeks are required under the second. A commencement and termination form must be filed at the beginning and end of the clerkship. The forms are available on our website.

What is the purpose of the three-month clerkship?

The clerkship is an educational requirement designed in part to ensure that newly-admitted attorneys are familiar with Vermont law, particularly practice and procedures. The applicant should develop, with the supervising attorney, a systematic course of study for preparation in the general practice of law in Vermont. The supervising attorney should provide the greatest breadth of experience during the clerkship, including enlisting the assistance of other attorneys as appropriate. The clerkship also serves a mentorship purpose: after completing a clerkship, the newly-admitted attorney will have developed a professional relationship with an experienced Vermont attorney with whom he or she may be able to consult during the early stages of professional practice.

When do I fulfill the clerkship requirement?

The clerkship may be done after the first year of law school and within two years of examination. It may be done in stages, for example, during two summer recesses from law school or as a student internship. The Board can require an applicant to be re-examined if the clerkship is not completed within two years of passing all parts of the exam. **The clerkship requirement does not need to be completed or commenced before taking the bar exam.**

How do I find a clerkship?

Prospective clerks must find their own clerkships by directly contacting eligible attorneys. The Vermont Bar Association (a voluntary, professional organization of Vermont attorneys) publishes a directory of Vermont-licensed attorneys with contact information. This directory can be purchased for \$32 and is free to its members. The VBA also has advertising opportunities in their publications and on their website, www.vtbar.org. You may contact them at 802-223-2020.

Must the clerkship take place within Vermont?

Not necessarily, although clerking in Vermont is preferable since the focus of the clerkship study must be on Vermont law. If you are considering a clerkship outside the state, we recommend that you contact the Board of Bar Examiners in advance to ensure that the proposed clerkship will meet that requirement.

Can I expect to be paid for my clerkship?

Whether a clerk is employed and compensated by the sponsoring attorney during the clerkship is a private matter between the attorney and clerk.