



## INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY JUDICIAL INTERNS

The Trial Court Administrator's Office for the 26<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of North Carolina is seeking law students to serve as judicial interns for the judiciary in Mecklenburg County. This position is unpaid. All unpaid individuals who volunteer their time are considered interns. Interns who are not receiving payment from an outside party in relation to their voluntary service are considered employees of the Court.

### ABOUT OUR JUDICIARY

**Superior Court Judges** are attorneys who are elected for each district in non-partisan elections for eight-year terms. Regular superior court judges must reside in the district in which they are elected, but rotate from one district to another within their division.

The senior resident superior court judge is responsible for court operations within the district. By statute, the senior resident superior court judge is the most senior judge in the district and is responsible for carrying out various administrative duties and appointing magistrates and some other court officials.

The North Carolina Constitution requires superior court judges to rotate between districts, or "ride circuit." Each superior court judge holds court for at least six months in a superior court district. The rotation method was developed to avoid favoritism that might result from always having the same judges hold court where they live, where they might be personally familiar with and interested in the cases brought before the court.

The Superior Court is the proper division for the trial of civil actions in which the amount in controversy exceeds \$25,000. It is also the proper division, without regard to the amount in controversy, for certain special proceedings, condemnation actions and proceedings, corporate receiverships, review of decisions of administrative agencies, and where the principal relief sought is injunctive or declaratory to establish the validity of a statute, ordinance or regulation, or enforcement or declaration of any claim of constitutional right. In addition, the Superior Court Division, through the clerk of superior court, has exclusive jurisdiction for probate of wills and for administration of decedent's estates.

As to criminal jurisdiction, the Superior Court has original jurisdiction in all felony cases and in some misdemeanor cases. Most misdemeanors are tried first in the District Court, from which a conviction may be appealed to the Superior Court for trial de novo by a jury. Both criminal and civil cases in superior court are tried before a twelve-person jury.

**District Court Judges** are attorneys elected for each district in non-partisan elections for four years and must reside in the district in which they are elected. The Chief Justice of the Supreme court of North Carolina designates one of the judges as Chief District Court Judge, and this judge has administrative duties, including assigned the judges to sessions of court.

The jurisdiction of the District Court is extensive and may be divided into four categories: criminal, civil, juvenile, and magisterial.

The criminal jurisdiction of the District Court Division includes preliminary probable cause hearings in felony cases, and virtually all misdemeanor and infraction cases. Trials in criminal and infraction cases are by district court judges; no trial by jury is available for such cases. Appeals are to the superior court for trial de novo before a jury.

In addition, the district courts share concurrent jurisdiction with the superior courts in general civil cases. However, the District Court is the proper jurisdiction for general civil cases where the amount in controversy is \$10,000 or less. The civil district court also handles matters dealing with domestic issues such as custody, child support, equitable distribution and divorce actions. Civil cases in District Court may be tried before a jury; appeals are to the Court of Appeals.

All civil cases involving claims for money damages of \$15,000 or less are subject to court-ordered, non-binding arbitration. Certain property disputes, family law matters, estates, special proceedings, and class actions are excluded from court ordered arbitration. If a case is not resolved at arbitration, it may be appealed and heard before a judge or jury.

The court's jurisdiction also extends to all juvenile proceedings, mental health hospital commitments, and domestic relations cases. Juvenile proceedings concern children who are delinquent, undisciplined, abused, neglected, or dependent. These proceedings are initiated by petition, and the hearing conducted by the judge may be less formal than in adult cases. Juveniles alleged to be delinquent are entitled to have the court appoint counsel for them.

Magistrates are also judicial officers of the District Court Division. In criminal cases, magistrates issue arrest and search warrants, conduct initial appearances, and determine conditions of pretrial release. For some relatively minor criminal offenses they may accept guilty pleas, impose punishment and conduct trials. In civil cases, they preside over the trial of small claims (\$5,000 or less).

## **THE VALUE OF A JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP**

A judicial internship provides direct insight into the judicial process and is a valuable and enriching experience. Judicial interns gain practical experience by attending judicial proceedings, performing legal research and providing other assistance to our judges. Judicial interns are also exposed to the methods and customs of practitioners and learn the level of professional behavior expected of lawyers. Many former judicial interns find the prestige and experience associated with service as a judicial intern broadens their future employment opportunities.

## **DUTIES OF JUDICIAL INTERNS**

The duties and functions of a judicial intern are determined by the employing judge. In most chambers, judicial interns concentrate on legal research and writing. Typically, the broad range of duties assigned to a judicial intern includes conducting legal research, preparing bench memos, drafting orders and opinions, proofreading the judge's orders and opinions, verifying citations, communicating with counsel regarding case management and procedural requirements, and assisting the judge during courtroom proceedings. Some judges also may assign maintain the chambers library and other administrative duties to their judicial intern.

Judicial interns are also expected to work cooperatively with chambers staff and court personnel. The employing judge must be confident in the judicial interns' professionalism in interacting with counsel, litigants and the public. A judicial intern is bound by the ethical standards established by the judge and the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees.

Judicial interns may work for an individual judge or work in a pool that supports multiple judges. Virtual judicial internship options are available on a case by case basis.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

Interested individuals must be rising second or third year law students currently enrolled in good standing with an accredited law school. All applicants must have excellent academic credentials and possess superior analytical, research, and writing skills. Law review, moot court, and mock trial experience is preferred.

## **PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The successful candidate is mature, responsible, poised and tactful, exercises good judgment, uses initiative, and maintains a professional appearance and demeanor at all times. Successful candidates are also able to work harmoniously with others and communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

## **BACKGROUND CHECK**

This is a sensitive position within the judiciary. The selected candidate will be subject to a criminal history background check. The internship will be considered provisional until the background check is completed. Applicants who have cases pending before the court will not be considered.

**APPLICATION & INTERNSHIP CYCLE**—Opportunities are generally available year-round.

### **Spring 2025 Programs**

<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>Internship Begins</b>	<b>Exit Evaluation</b>	<b>Internship Ends</b>
<b>November 25th, 2024</b>	Week of January 6th, 2025	Week of April 21st, 2025	May 3rd, 2025

### **Summer 2025 Programs**

<b>Applications Accepted</b>	<b>Internship Begins</b>	<b>Exit Evaluation</b>	<b>Internship Ends</b>
<b>January 1st, 2025- April 7th, 2025</b>	Week of May 5th, 2025	Week of July 21st, 2025	August 8th, 2025

### **Fall 2025 Programs**

<b>Applications Accepted</b>	<b>Internship Begins</b>	<b>Exit Evaluation</b>	<b>Internship Ends</b>
<b>June 2nd, 2025 - July 28th, 2025</b>	Week of August 18th, 2025	Week of December 1st, 2025	December 12th, 2025

**Hours of Work:** Hours are flexible. Judicial interns may work any weekday, Monday through Friday, from 8:30am to 5:00pm. A total of 20 hours per week is preferred. No nights, weekends, or major holiday hours are required.

**Qualified applicants may submit a letter, resume, and writing sample to:**

Community Access and Outreach Administrator—Judicial Internships  
832 East Fourth Street, Suite 4420  
Charlotte, NC 28202

Email: [Mecklenburg.CAO@nccourts.org](mailto:Mecklenburg.CAO@nccourts.org)



**School Information:**

Name of Law School: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Year:      1L    2L    3L    Graduate

Course Load:        Full Time \_\_\_\_\_ Part Time \_\_\_\_\_

Unofficial Class Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have experience with Law Review, Moot Court, or Trial Advocacy?    Yes    No

What days are you able to work?    Monday    Tuesday    Wednesday    Thursday    Friday

Number of Hours Available per week: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in a virtual internship?    Yes    No

Virtual internships are offered based upon judicial need. Students who serve as virtual judicial interns must be able to come to the courthouse once per month.

**Comments:** *(Please indicate if there are special circumstances regarding your availability.)*

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I understand this is an UNPAID internship. I also understand I may be subject to a criminal background check due to the fact I may have access to sensitive information.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this completed application, along with your resume and writing sample to:

**Community Access and Outreach Administrator- Judicial Internships**  
**832 East Fourth Street, Suite 4420**  
**Charlotte, NC 28202**

Email: [Mecklenburg.CAO@nccourts.org](mailto:Mecklenburg.CAO@nccourts.org)

***Thank you for taking the time to complete this application. Due to the high number of applications we receive, we will only contact you if we feel you are a qualified candidate for any positions we may have available.***