

WRITING SAMPLE GUIDELINES

All writing samples submitted in consideration for employment, should comply with the following criteria:

1. Each writing sample submitted should be no less than 5 and no more than 12 pages in length.
2. Each writing sample should be accompanied by a cover page explaining (a) the sample's original purpose (e.g., a legal writing class assignment; a moot court brief; an internal memorandum for an employer; a court pleading); (b) when and for whom the sample was written; (c) the extent of editing by any third party; and (d) if the writing sample is an excerpt from a larger document, the nature of that larger document, including issues addressed. If an applicant chooses to submit a writing sample containing confidential or privileged information, the applicant must identify the steps taken (e.g., redactions; changed names; consent obtained from a client or an employer) to preserve the confidential or privileged nature of the document.
3. Each writing sample submitted should demonstrate the applicant's ability to analyze legal issues, such as an argument section of a brief. If an applicant submits a portion of a larger work, the applicant should provide context for the section submitted.
4. Each writing sample should be written within two years of submission.
5. For current and former judicial clerks, who choose to submit a judicial opinion or order as a writing sample, it must be a published opinion or order. It also must be accompanied by a letter from the judge authorizing the use of the opinion or order.
6. If a writing sample was authored by more than one attorney, the applicant should identify which portions of the writing sample he or she wrote. When an applicant submits a heavily edited or coauthored writing sample, he or she needs to indicate which sections they authored and describe the extent of the editing. It is desirable for applicants to submit unedited writing samples for consideration.
7. If an applicant submits a writing sample marked "confidential," the applicant must also include a statement that he or she has obtained the necessary permission to use the document as a writing sample.
8. When an applicant submits a redacted writing sample, the applicant should explain the redactions (such as redacting factual information to protect client confidentiality).
9. If an applicant is unable to comply with any of the above criteria, there is nothing inappropriate in submitting a writing sample developed for the express purpose of a job application. Keep in mind that any writing sample submitted should demonstrate the applicant's ability to analyze legal issues and apply the facts to the law (i.e. an argument section of a brief).