

## NEW APPOINTMENT CHECKLIST

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### **Form AO-78** - APPLICATION FOR JUDICIAL BRANCH FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

This form -- Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment -- contains the personal history, education, and work experience data. The information provided on this form will be evaluated by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO) to ensure that you meet all the requisite requirements for the grade to which you are appointed. It is therefore important that you provide complete and accurate information.

In completing this form, please note:

#### **ADDRESS:**

If you currently reside out-of-state prior to the start of your clerkship and/or appointment and you plan to relocate, **do not** use that address on your appointment paperwork. To avoid a delay in salary, you need to have an established address in advance for the state in which you will be working. Your paperwork cannot be submitted to the AO for payroll processing and tax purposes without a proper address.

#### **EDUCATION:**

"Dates Attended" -- the month and year are sufficient.

"Date Received" -- the **exact date is required**.

"Number of Credit hours" can be omitted if a degree was received.

"Grade Point Average or Scholastic Standing" -- Scholastic standing may help meet the requirement for a law clerk to be appointed to Grade 11, particularly if applicant did not serve on a Law Journal, Moot Court competition, or other type of demonstrated proficiency in legal studies.

Information regarding work on an editorial board of law review, and other noteworthy honors, should be reflected under #18(c).

#### **APPLICANTS FOR LEGAL POSITIONS:**

Admission to the bar and one year of full-time legal work experience after graduation from law school is required for the grade JSP 12. **The exact date of bar admission must be listed.**

### **WORK EXPERIENCE:**

Start with present position and work back 10 years. Law Clerk applicants should include all law-related experience, whether obtained before or after graduation from law school. For work experience to be used in evaluating job requirements, **exact dates are required (not just month/year)**.

Address and telephone number of employers is not critical but should be provided if known.

### **WITHHOLDING FORMS:**

Federal tax withholding form (W-4)  
State tax withholding form

These forms must be submitted with the initial appointment paperwork and contain a proper address as indicated above; otherwise, taxes are calculated by the Administrative Office at the single rate, zero exemptions.

### **FORM I-9, EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION:**

This form is required for each new employee and must be submitted with the initial appointment paperwork. Please submit a copy of the required identity documentation with your paperwork and bring the originals with you on your start date.

Verification is required of either:

- One (1) item from List A

(For example, a U. S. Passport);

OR

- One (1) item from List B **AND** one (1) item from List C.

(For example, we must verify a State-issued driver's license **AND** original social security card **OR** a state-issued driver's license **AND** certified copy of employee's birth certificate.)

Section 1 - Completed by the employee.

Section 2 - Certification will be completed by an authorized court representative.

### **DIRECT DEPOSIT FORM:**

This form is required for all new hires and must be submitted with initial paperwork. Please ensure that your bank routing and account numbers are accurate. Alternatively, you can attach a voided check showing all account and routing numbers.

In section 3, the Routing Transit Number is always a nine-digit number. The Check Digit is the last (ninth) digit of the Routing Transit Number.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN COMPARISON AND ELECTION FORM:**

**You have 60 days within which to make your election for health insurance coverage.** The sooner the election form is completed, the sooner the coverage will begin. In all instances, however, this form must be completed and forwarded to the Administrative Office within 60 days of the appointment. Coverage cannot begin until after the date your employment begins. The effective date of your coverage will be the start of the next pay period following your enrollment. Pay periods begin on a bi-weekly cycle.

The federal system has an “open season” for health insurance once a year, typically in November. If health insurance is not elected within the 60-day time period, the employee will be required to wait until an open season to make such election.

**HEALTH INSURANCE FORMS MUST BE TYPED OR LEGIBLY WRITTEN IN BLUE OR BLACK INK. Forms with strike-overs or white-outs cannot be accepted for processing.**

Plan comparison is accessible from <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance>

### **LIFE INSURANCE BROCHURE AND ELECTION FORM:**

**Basic Life Insurance (salary plus \$2,000) is deemed elected unless specifically waived. Forms with strike-overs or white-outs cannot be accepted for processing.** You have 60 days to elect additional coverage.

### **DENTAL INSURANCE AND VISION INSURANCE:**

Dental insurance and vision insurance are available. **You have 60 days to sign up for either or both.** Additional information and plan comparison tools for both dental and vision insurance can be found at <https://www.benefeds.com/>

### **THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (Not available for term law clerks or temporary hires):**

The Thrift Savings Plan is one aspect of the three-tier retirement plan that covers federal employees. Law clerks are excluded from this plan unless they are designated by the appointing judge to be a “career” law clerk. The career status for law clerks is considered optional and used only for positions that exceed four years. Temporary hires are ineligible to enroll in this plan. **Forms with strike-overs or white-outs cannot be accepted for processing.**

## **SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS INFORMATION:**

The judiciary provides other benefits to employees. More specific information regarding those benefits will be provided directly to the employee during the onboarding process. Additional information regarding these benefits can be found at <https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits>

## **DESIGNATIONS OF BENEFICIARY:**

In the event of an employee's death, many federal benefits result in the payment of money. Generally, you can decide who receives the payments by filing the appropriate designation forms. In the absence of a properly filed Designation of Beneficiary form, benefits will be following the legal order of precedence below:

1. To your widow or widower, if living;
2. To your child or your children in equal shares, with the share of any deceased child distributed among the descendants of that child;
3. To your parents in equal shares or the entire amount to the surviving parent;
4. To your estate executor or administrator;
5. To your next of kin entitled under the laws of the state in which you live.

If you are satisfied with the legal order of precedence, you do not need to file a designation of beneficiary.

Designation forms must be free of mistakes. Forms with corrections/scratch-outs will not be accepted for filing. Designation forms must contain **original signatures**.

## **FINGERPRINT CHECKS/BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS:**

Each new appointee is required to have an FBI fingerprint check. Certain high-sensitive positions also require a full background investigation. The court will coordinate fingerprinting and prepare the requisite paperwork for completion of the fingerprint check and background investigation (if required). Employees are considered to be "provisionally hired" pending completion of the fingerprint check/background investigation with a favorable suitability determination.

## **SECURITY ID:**

Security identification cards are issued for access to your office and other areas of the building as necessary. These security cards are issued by designated Judiciary personnel in conjunction with the U.S. Marshal's Office. This process will be coordinated for you.