

TCDIP 1L Clerkship: Launching Careers in the Twin Cities

For close to 20 years, the Twin Cities Diversity in Practice 1L Clerkship has helped launch the careers of law students of color and students from all backgrounds in the Twin Cities. We strengthen the legal talent pipeline with strategic partnerships between TCDIP Member law firms and corporate legal departments.

Twin Cities Diversity in Practice (TCDIP) builds opportunity and community for attorneys of color and all who seek to advance an inclusive profession. We envision a legal community free of barriers, where all attorneys have abundant opportunities to succeed and thrive.

This guide includes an overview of how the clerkship process works, a timeline, and FAQs.

How the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Works

There are four main steps to hosting a TCDIP 1L clerk next summer (more details on the next pages):

1. Determine how many TCDIP 1L Clerks your organization will host.
2. Coordinate with your partner organization(s) regarding timeline and number of clerks hosted
3. Complete the registration form (required by both law firms and corporate legal departments)
4. Submit your job posting (firms only)

TCDIP advertises the program to law schools across the country and encourages 1L students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds to apply. Anyone can apply for the positions and there is no prohibition based on race, ethnicity, or other characteristics. Be sure to read the FAQ section of this document.

TCDIP 1L Clerkship jobs are posted to our website and advertised to 1L students across the country. Employers are also welcome to post their summer positions on other platforms. TCDIP asks law firm employers to register with their corporate partner(s) and indicate how many TCDIP 1L Clerks they intend to hire at the time of registration. Both the law firm and corporate partner are required to fill out the registration form.

All organizations hosting TCDIP 1L Clerks, including corporate partners, must be TCDIP Member Organizations. The only exceptions available are for non-profit organizations or governmental agencies. Please contact info@diversityinpractice.org to find out how to join.



TCDIP 1L Clerkship Timeline

Here are the key dates to keep in mind:

Date	Item	
8/11/2026	TCDIP 1L Clerkship Employer Registration Opens	Decide if your organization will host a TCDIP 1L Clerk with a partner organization next summer. To partner with a TCDIP Member Organization, reach out to their Member Representative and Recruiting contacts. Email info@diversityinpractice.org if you need a copy of the database. We recommend partnerships between firms and corporate legal departments that have an existing relationship when possible. If your organization is open to hosting multiple TCDIP 1L Clerks, determine how many clerks you can host and who you will partner with.
10/28/2026	Employer registration closes.	Use the online form to register your firm or corporate legal department.
10/31/2026 – 11/12/2026	Law firms submit job postings	Law firms should prepare a job description that accurately reflects the TCDIP 1L Clerkship experience at their organization, including the corporate partner. Employers determine what materials to collect from students, such as cover letter, resume, transcript, writing sample, etc. Law firms will need to indicate the compensation range for their position, and whether your organization hires TCDIP 1L Clerks with one of the following goals: 1) Evaluating candidates to fill their 2028 2L Summer Associate class 2) Providing great legal experience for clerks, but without the intention of evaluating candidates for a 2L Summer Associate role in summer 2028 3) Evaluating candidates for potential future employment, but without specific knowledge of 2028 2L Summer Associate hiring needs.

11/17/2026	Student applications open	TCDIP will advertise the program to law schools throughout the country. TCDIP sends information about the TCDIP 1L Clerkship program to law school career centers and law student affinity groups. We do several in-person and virtual presentations. Employers are also welcome to post the position on other platforms.
11/17/2026 – 1/30/2027	1L students apply to TCDIP 1L Clerkship positions	Students apply directly to the law firm. Law firms are responsible for reviewing applications, conducting interviews, and hiring TCDIP 1L Clerks. Law firms and corporate legal departments may collaborate as much as desired during the hiring process. We know that many firms review applications on a rolling basis. We strongly encourage firms to review all applications received before January 30, 2026.
March 2027	TCDIP 1L Clerkship hiring complete; law firms submit information for 2026 TCDIP 1L Clerks	Employers evaluate applications, conduct interviews, and hire TCDIP 1L Clerks directly. Firms may collaborate with corporate legal departments on hiring as much as each party desires.
Spring 2027	Programming for participating law firms and corporate legal departments, including best practices panel for employers	In the spring, TCDIP hosts a forum for participating law firms and corporate legal departments about best practices for successful summer programs. TCDIP collects information about hired TCDIP 1L Clerks and communicates with them directly about summer programming. TCDIP does not collect demographic information from TCDIP 1L Clerks until the end of their summer employment.
Summer 2027	TCDIP 1L Clerkship programming	Orientation In-person kickoff Professional development Small group coaching sessions Networking opportunities And more!

Frequently Asked Questions

These FAQs are meant to provide general information for TCDIP 1L Clerkship participating law firms and corporate partners. FAQs are not meant to take the place of legal advice. Consult legal counsel in making decisions about whether to participate in the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Program, how to make lawful hiring decisions, and all other legal questions.

1. What is the responsibility of TCDIP 1L Clerkship employers to ensure their hiring practices conform to state and federal laws and regulations?

TCDIP 1L Clerkship participating firms and corporate legal departments should continue to evaluate all applicants along the same metrics and without regard to their race or ethnicity. Participating firms and corporate legal departments should also continue to comply with EEOC standards, including not asking applicants about their racial or ethnic background.

2. Are there specific requirements for TCDIP 1L Clerkship candidates?

No. TCDIP promotes the program to law schools across the country and advertises that our mission is to build opportunities and community for attorneys of color and all who seek to advance an inclusive profession. We encourage students from racial and ethnic backgrounds historically underrepresented in the legal industry to apply. We do not discourage or prohibit applications from any group or based on any protected characteristic, including race or ethnicity.

Law firms are responsible for setting requirements such as GPA, etc. We advise law firms to evaluate all candidates across the same qualitative metrics such as writing skills, work experience, and other substantive information gleaned from the interview process.

We strongly encourage participating organizations to highlight their values – and how they expect attorneys and summer associates to embody those values – with **all candidates**, including TCDIP 1L Clerkship candidates, other summer associate candidates, and attorney candidates.

3. Should organizations pause or reverse their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts following the 2023 *SFFA* ruling and other executive orders?

The *SFFA* ruling and executive orders have increased scrutiny of organizations' diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts and energized certain groups that are challenging such efforts. However, based on NALP data, TCDIP strategic planning, and conversations with our Board of Directors and Member Organizations, TCDIP's mission remains critically important. TCDIP and our Members firmly believe that now, more than ever, we must use our collective efforts increase racial diversity within the legal profession. We know from our [Eliminating Barriers](#) study that in order to further the TCDIP mission, employers must continue to diversify the ranks of attorneys at all levels. We encourage TCDIP Members to publicly commit to an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace.

Guidelines for Clerks, Law Firms, Corporate Legal Departments, and TCDIP

These guidelines are designed to facilitate a successful and enriching summer for TCDIP 1L Clerks. Please review and share with attorneys working with TCDIP 1L Clerks.

Role of Firm:

- Reviews the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Guide for Law Firms and Corporate Partners.
- Identifies internal supervisor for TCDIP 1L Clerk to provide orientation and oversee and distribute work projects.
- Coordinates summer schedule with corporate partner and communicates the schedule to the TCDIP 1L Clerk ahead of time.
- Pays TCDIP 1L Clerk's salary for the duration of their employment, including time spent with corporate partner.
- Regularly checks in with 1L Clerk during time at corporate partner and is available to answer questions.
- Provides prompt, actionable feedback and evaluation to 1L Clerk, including a mid-summer check-in.
- If needed, connects the law student with TCDIP 1L Clerkship coach with concerns.
- Ensures that 1L Clerks are aware of TCDIP summer programming, avoids conflicts with these dates, and encourages firm members to attend programming as appropriate.
- Communicates expectations about return offer process to TCDIP 1L Clerks, including if no return offers will be made.
- Stays in communication with TCDIP throughout the process from hiring to return offers.

Role of Corporation:

- Reviews the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Guide for Law Firms and Corporate Partners.
- Identifies internal supervisor for TCDIP 1L Clerk to provide orientation and oversee and distribute work projects.
- Coordinates summer schedule with law firm partner.
- Commits to providing substantive projects for the 1L Clerk.
- Provides feedback on 1L Clerk's performance to law firm partner immediately following the conclusion of their time at the corporation.
- Ensures that 1L Clerks are aware of TCDIP summer programming, avoids conflicts with these dates, and encourages attorneys to attend programming as appropriate.

Role of TCDIP 1L Clerk:

- Reviews the TCDIP 1L Clerkship Guide for Students.
- Secures housing and transportation for the summer.
- Works at both the TCDIP 1L Clerkship firm and corporate law department.
- Participates in all programming and receptions hosted by law firm and corporate partners.
- Actively participates in TCDIP summer programs.
- Proactively communicates with TCDIP if unable to attend an event or program.

- Abides by in-office expectations and hybrid work requirements at the law firm and corporate partner.
- Communicates with TCDIP in a timely manner if there are any concerns or issues during the summer.
- Commits to providing feedback on summer experience to TCDIP, including completing a survey at the end of the summer.

Role of Twin Cities Diversity in Practice:

- Promotes the TCDIP 1L Clerkship program to law students across the country and in the Midwest, with a focus on expanding the pipeline to under-represented groups, including law students of color
- Develops programming for 1L Clerks and law firm and corporate partners, including:
 - Orientation with information about expectations, professional habits, and tips for success
 - Professional development programming, including networking skills
 - Networking opportunities across TCDIP Membership
 - Mentorship opportunities with attorneys and senior leaders
 - Professional coaching in confidential, small group sessions
- Provides ongoing support and communications to employers and students.
- Collects, analyzes, and shares aggregate information about each class of TCDIP 1L Clerks.