Professional and Ethical Standards for Students Participating in Legal Recruiting

Effective June 2019

Dear Students,

We recognize that you want your law school investment to provide personal and professional gains. To that end, the Office of Career Planning is committed to ensuring you are informed of the broadest array of career opportunities and are able to effectively pursue the options you choose.

For most students, the legal hiring process is a new experience and is not necessarily intuitive, particularly when it comes to understanding evolving professional norms. Adhering to the professional and ethical standards outlined below will help you meet with maximum levels of success as a job candidate while also maintaining an efficient, fair, and ethical recruiting process for both students and employers.1

We expect students to abide by both the spirit and the letter of these standards; straying too far from these guidelines risks, among other things, negatively affecting the professional reputation of both you and your fellow students, as well as our school more generally. That said, we also recognize that circumstances requiring exceptions will necessarily arise and those must be governed by an overarching standard of reasonableness and good faith.

If you have questions about these standards now or at any time during the recruiting process, please come talk to us. You should never hesitate to ask questions, express concerns, or seek our advice about any recruiting or employment-related issue. We are here to support you.

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Ramji Kaul, ‘05
Assistant Dean for Career Planning

1 Employers recruiting at Michigan Law are also expected to abide by standards set out in the Employer Recruiting Guidelines and Information (Effective June 2019).
I.  General Provisions

a. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional, and collegial manner at all times during the recruiting process. Students are expected to treat staff, employer representatives, and all others engaged in the recruiting process with professional courtesy and respect.

b. Students are expected to comply with all OCP policies and procedures. In addition to the standards included here, other policies and procedures governing specific programs (e.g., Early Interview Week) will be provided by OCP. Failure to comply with OCP policies and procedures may result in consequences as determined by the Assistant Dean for Career Planning in consultation with the Senior Assistant Dean.

c. Students are expected to comply with the Law School’s Academic Regulations for JD Students regarding classroom attendance. The Regulations (Part One, Section VII) provide in relevant part, “Bar admission rules, as well as good education standards, require regular attendance in classes. Excessive absences may influence the grade given in a course and may, at the discretion of the instructor, result in a reduction of credit hours or dismissal from class.” There is no exception to this regulation for classes missed due to job search-related activities. Missing class for job search-related activities during the 1L fall semester is prohibited. Missing class for job search-related activities during any subsequent semester is strongly discouraged.

II.  Engagement with the Office of Career Planning

a. Students are expected to be active and engaged in, and take ownership of their career search. This means, for example, that students are expected to engage in a regular process of self-assessment and career exploration, regularly work with OCP attorney-counselors, read and respond to OCP communications, and avail themselves of the resources and programs provided by OCP.

b. For events where responses are requested for attendees (i.e., RSVPs), students are expected to respond if they intend to attend the event, and to attend if they have so indicated. If a student is unable to attend an event to
which they have responded, the student is expected to inform the event coordinator of the cancellation in a respectful and timely manner prior to the event.

c. Students are expected to attend appointments they have scheduled with OCP attorney-counselors. If a student is unable to attend a scheduled appointment, the student is expected to inform OCP of the cancellation in a respectful and timely manner.

III. Application Materials

Throughout the employment search process, students must represent their qualifications and interests fully and accurately. Providing false information or misrepresenting academic qualifications during the hiring process may result in elimination from consideration for employment by the employer, revocation of an offer of employment, disciplinary action by the Law School, and disqualification from admission to practice by bar admission authorities.

a. RESUMES. Students should be prepared to provide resumes to employers that accurately describe their experiences, activities, and interests.2

b. TRANSCRIPTS. Students should be prepared to provide all academic transcripts to employers. Under no circumstances should transcripts be falsified, misrepresented, or distorted, either in writing or orally. Any redactions to a transcript must be clearly identified and explained.

c. WRITING SAMPLES. Students should be prepared to provide writing samples to employers.

   i. Writing samples should be wholly original work (i.e., nobody has assisted with the creation of the work beyond basic proofreading and general critique). Where the writing was co-authored with others, the student’s contributions should be clearly identified.

   ii. Writing samples from law-related employment must be edited or redacted to preserve client confidentiality and used only with the permission of the employer.

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2 Temporarily joining a student organization, journal, or employer for the specific purpose of bolstering credentials during the interview process is presumptively considered to be a misleading and unethical practice. For example, a student may not join a journal specifically for the purpose of including it on a resume during recruiting season only to withdraw from the journal as soon as the student has accepted an employment offer.
d. **CORRECTIONS.** Any inaccurate, outdated, or incomplete information inadvertently provided to an employer must be supplemented and/or corrected in a timely manner after the deficiency is identified.

IV. **Interviews**

a. **ACKNOWLEDGING INTERVIEW INVITATIONS.** With the exception of interviews assigned by OCP (via Symplicity) for on-campus interviewing, students should acknowledge all interview invitations within one business day, even if they are not yet ready to accept or decline the invitation. Students are encouraged to promptly decline interview invitations from employers whom they are no longer seriously considering.

b. **ACCEPTING AND DECLINING INTERVIEW INVITATIONS.** Students should interview with only those employers in whom they have a genuine interest. In fairness to both employers and peers, students should act in good faith and promptly decline interviews with employers that they are no longer seriously considering.

c. **INTERVIEW CANCELLATIONS.** Absent exceptional circumstances, students must adhere to interview scheduling commitments.

   i. Interview cancellations should only occur for good cause and should promptly be communicated to OCP and/or the employer as may be appropriate. Students should inform OCP of cancellations for screening interviews awarded through on-campus interview programs (e.g., Early Interview Week). Students should directly inform employers for all other interview cancellations.

   ii. A student who fails to cancel an interview in accordance with the deadlines and procedures for a particular program will be considered a “no show.” At minimum, consequences for a “no show” include a written apology to the employer. In instances of repeated “no shows,” forfeiture of future interview opportunities may occur.

   iii. A student who cancels an excessive number of interviews may forfeit future interview opportunities and/or have other consequences imposed as may be deemed appropriate.

d. **INTERVIEW TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT.** Students should confirm an employer’s travel reimbursement policy with the employer prior to incurring any expenses for the trip.
i. Students should request reimbursement only for reasonable expenses directly related to the interview and incurred in good faith. A student may not seek reimbursement for amounts in excess of expenses actually incurred. Be aware that failure to do so may result in non-reimbursement, elimination from consideration for employment, and/or the revocation of offers by employers.

ii. During trips where interviews with more than one employer occur, expenses should be prorated in accordance with those employers’ reimbursement policies. With respect to private sector interviews, if the trip involves two or more firms, the process of prorating expenses is done by the firms with little involvement from the student. OCP will provide additional information regarding this process and the reimbursement of expenses as part of interview program information.

iii. Interview travel costs that are not reimbursed by an employer may be reimbursable through the Law School’s Interview Travel Reimbursement Program.

V. Considering Employment Offers

a. ACKNOWLEDGING OFFERS. Students should acknowledge all offers of employment within one business day, even if the student is not yet ready to accept or decline the offer.

b. OFFER CONSIDERATION PERIOD. Students must affirmatively respond and accept or decline an offer by the deadline set by the employer.

i. Prior to the offer deadline, students may ask an employer for a reasonable extension of time to continue consideration. Extensions are granted at the sole discretion of the employer. Absent being granted an extension, students should expect that an offer expires at the deadline set by the employer.

ii. If the offer letter includes terms requiring students to “reaffirm interest” within a specific timeframe, students must comply with those terms in order to preserve the offer.

c. OFFER LIMITS. Students are encouraged to hold open no more than three offers at any one time. Students are prohibited from holding open more than five offers at any one time. For each offer received that places the student over five offers, the student must release an offer within three days to remain at or below the limit.
VI. Accepting and Declining Employment Offers

a. **No Interviewing After Acceptance.** Unless cleared by an employer or OCP, a student may not continue to apply or interview for employment opportunities for that same period after accepting a full-time offer for summer or permanent employment.
   i. After acceptance, students should immediately release any other open offers and not renew the search thereafter.
   ii. Notwithstanding the above, students may continue to interview for and accept post-graduate clerkship opportunities.

b. **Declining Offers.** Students should promptly decline offers of employment that are no longer being seriously considered. This process allows additional opportunities for classmates and allows the employer to consider additional candidates in a timely fashion.

c. **Rescinding an Accepted Offer.** Rescission of acceptance can have serious negative consequences and should only occur in exceedingly rare circumstances. In the event that a student feels it necessary to rescind an accepted offer for either summer or permanent employment, the student must first consult with OCP prior to informing the employer.

VII. Students Working As Recruiters

Students participating as recruiters on behalf of an employer are obligated to comply with the Employer Recruiting Guidelines established by the Law School.

VIII. American Bar Association Reporting Requirements

The American Bar Association (ABA) sets standards for the manner in which the Law School must document employment information for graduates. As of result of ABA requirements, students are periodically requested to report and/or verify certain employment information. Students are expected to promptly and accurately respond to OCP requests for employment-related information.

IX. Reporting Misconduct

The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmation action. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of equal
opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. All employers who use the Office of Career Planning’s facilities or services must comply with this nondiscrimination policy.

Students are strongly encouraged to report to the Office of Career Planning any violations of this policy or other inappropriate conduct by employers during the recruiting process. This includes improper behavior during all stages of the interviewing process, including on-campus interviewing, off-campus recruiting events, and visits to the employer.

3 The United States Armed Forces policies continue to discriminate on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. Current federal law, however, effectively prevents the Law School from applying its anti-discrimination policy to military recruiters, including those for the Judge Advocate General Corps. The fact that military offices recruit on-campus in no way reflects an endorsement by the Law School of their discriminatory employment practices or by any particular individual with past, current, or future military service. The Law School is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all students.