

Quick Tips from CP&P: Applying for Prosecutor Positions

Where to look:

Federal United States Attorney positions are posted at <http://www.justice.gov/careers/legal/> and <https://www.usajobs.gov/>. You can also find positions posted at http://www.ndaa.org/employment_home.html.

Federal US Attorney's offices have summer internship programs (generally unpaid) that offer a good way to get relevant experience and improve the chance of getting a full-time position.

State district attorney's offices have openings posted on their websites – check your top choices at regular intervals.

State district attorney's offices also have summer internship programs (generally unpaid) described on their website. If the website does not provide the process for applying, contact the office to find out whether there are summer internships.

All summer internships at prosecutor's offices are eligible for summer funding. Find out more about Penn's summer funding requirements [here](#).

Resumes:

Your resume should highlight your practical courtroom and clinical experience.

Create a resume tailored to prosecutor positions and use the position description as a guide to the aspects of your courtroom or clinical experience you highlight and how you describe them.

Both criminal defense and civil courtroom experience are valued.

Writing samples:

Your writing sample should be an advocacy piece that illustrates your persuasive writing ability while advocating a particular position.

Your writing sample should be written and edited entirely by you.

Be prepared to discuss the issues and arguments in your writing sample, as well as in any publications noted in your resume.

Interviews:

Do your research – look at the office's website, know the size of the staff and whether there is vertical or horizontal representation by prosecutors at that office.

Prior to the interview, observe courtrooms in action to understand how they work—especially in the jurisdiction where the office is located! Prepare thoughtful questions about courtroom processes.

Schedule a mock interview with CP&P and/or use InterviewStream, our on-line mock interview program. Once you are logged in, [instructions](#) for InterviewStream can be found on our "Careers" webpage under "Programs and Services". After you have created an account, you can also access InterviewStream here: <http://upennlaw.interviewstream.com> . If you are interested in receiving feedback from our office, please send the link to all-cpp@law.upenn.edu and we will watch the interview and provide you with our evaluation.

Bring your personality forward! Project your voice and be sure to charm the interviewer so that s/he should want to have you as a colleague.

Be sure to understand 4th Amendment (Search & Seizure) issues. Knowledge of this area of criminal procedure may aid in answering proposed hypothetical questions.

Be prepared to answer hypothetical questions. This practice is viewed as being illustrative of your ability to deal with unexpected courtroom situations and difficult ethical questions. Obtain examples from current/former prosecutors, criminal cases in the news, exam questions and web-based research.

Prepare a mock closing argument for why you should be hired to work in *that* office. If you are not specifically asked for a closing, this activity will give you a mental outline that can be easily plugged into your interview narrative.

You may have several panel interviews with interviewers at various levels in the office. Understand the organizational structure and divisions within the office, and don't ask questions that can be answered simply by researching the office website.

Be prepared to discuss hobbies and interests listed on your resume.

Refer to the victim and tell a personal story and/or your connection to the work.

Finally, remember the acronym below and weave your personal detail/resume information into these categories:

- V-victim
- I-integrity
- E-work ethic
- T-team