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Section 1 - Job Searching and Networking

Introduction
When attending an out-of-state law school, job searching has the added stress of not being in proximity to potential employers. There are options and ways to ease the stress of job searching from an out-of-state law school. However, you need to be intentional with your job search if you want to return to North Carolina.

Job Search Options at an Out-of-State Law School
There are four major resources that can be utilized to help ease the stress of job searching from out-of-state.

Career Services Offices. This is the easy answer. How many of you utilized the Career Services office at your law school? Unfortunately, too many students never set foot in the Career Services office other than for required events. Do not waste a convenient valuable resource that is included in the price of tuition! Become familiar with your Career Services office and utilize their job bank. Most Careers Services offices have reciprocity agreements with other Career Services offices around the country. If you are not sure whether your Career Services office has a reciprocity agreement with a North Carolina law school, go ask! Many Career Services offices also have updated alumni information. Ask for a list of alumni in North Carolina. Connecting with alumni in North Carolina can improve your chances of landing a job. You can only improve your chances of getting a job by asking for help from this resource.

Social Media. For Millennials, social networking is the new norm. Gone are the days of attending Rotary Club and rubbing elbows with the local barons of industry. In its place, we have targeted job advertisements on LinkedIn and Facebook. People even post legal jobs on Craigslist. Social media can be a great way to find a job and to be introduced to potential employers through people you already know. As a word to the wise, be sure that you have a professional-looking photo on your profile and that you have taken down (or at least made private) those spring break photos. Additionally, be sure to spruce up your LinkedIn profile so that potential employers get a holistic view of who you are. Add volunteer experiences, other languages you may know, your community involvement, any projects you may have
worked on and, of course, your job history. There is also a quick way to receive emails from LinkedIn when jobs are posted that meet your criteria, by location, experience, or otherwise. Expand your keyword search: attorney, associate, counsel, compliance, staff attorney, JD Preferred. Do not limit yourself to notifications about only “associate attorney” positions. Also, do not be afraid to inquire about jobs outside of your experience level - you never know! Take advantage of social networking!

**Networking.** You know people who know people! While Millennials are the kings of social media, hiring managers tend to belong to Generation Y or even the Baby Boomer generation. You need to brush up on your etiquette and make connections the old-fashioned way: face-to-face. As with social media, utilize your unseen network. Think about how many people each of your friends and family members know. Also, think about who alumni from your out-of-state law school living in North Carolina may know - or even your undergraduate school’s alumni! You have potential connections in many places. If you are attend an out-of-state law school, but are originally from North Carolina or likely to visit friends and family here during the year you should attempt to network with local attorneys during your visits. Additionally, the North Carolina Bar Association (“NCBA”) holds many pro bono events where law students can attend and participate, such as serving as a witness at a Wills for Heroes event. There are also many professional associations in North Carolina specific to a practice area that host events throughout the year, whether purely social or for CLE credit. These events allow you, the law student, to interact with and see practicing attorneys at work without having to go through the trouble of setting up the opportunity. The moral of the story is to use your greatest resource: your network of family and friends.

**Bar Association Websites.** Have you visited the [NCBA website](https://www.ncbar.org)? If you have not, you are missing out on this underutilized job searching resource. NCBA membership is free for law students. Among other resources posted on the NCBA website is a [career center](https://www.ncbar.org/career-center) where employers post job openings. As a member, you receive information on law school related events, bar association events, and other great opportunities such as assisting with pro bono legal events. Try to find events to attend when you are visiting North Carolina on a break.
Job Searching Targeted at Small Firms
Job searching is hard enough as it is, but the issue is compounded when you start searching for jobs at small firms. The tips below can help you secure a job with a small firm.

Introduce yourself. One of the best ways to make connections is to visit local law firms in the area in which you want to work and to set up informational interviews/meetings with an attorney at that firm. This is something you can do even when you are on vacation. Talk with an attorney who has practiced in that locale to find out about the local bar and other pertinent information related to practicing in the area. Most law schools have an alumni locator that will allow you to find attorneys across the country.

Career Services. As noted above, your Career Services department can be a great resource for law students and attorneys alike. Many small firms utilize their alma mater’s job bank to post internships and jobs. This is an easy method of advertising for alumni, and they use it frequently. Be proactive and look for those jobs!

Take internships with small firms. Small firms usually do not have the ability or resources to recruit the way large firms recruit. This means that you need to get your resume and your face in front of the partners at a small firm. It is a competitive job market, and small firms receive hundreds of resumes when they post an opening. You can improve your chances of getting hired if the firm already knows you and likes the quality of your work product. The best way to do that is to intern with a small firm. Your goal should be to work hard and impress the attorneys in hopes that it will lead to a job. Even if the firm you work for does not have any available positions, a position may open up at the firm before graduation. You never know what might happen, especially at a small firm. Finally, be willing to work for nominal compensation or even just for school credit, if your school offers it. The important part is to get your foot in the door and to create good work product!

Miscellaneous Job Searching Tips

Leverage your summer internships into a job. Work for organizations or firms where you actually have a chance of getting hired. I am not saying that you should avoid working for special interest groups or large
organizations, but most of them aren't going to hire many if any, of their interns after graduation. Be intentional with where you spend your summer internships. That is your best chance at impressing a potential employer and landing a full-time job after graduation.

**Take relevant classes.** An advanced legal writing course will serve you better than almost any other course. You can always research an area of the law, but if you don't focus on your writing, you won't be a good writer. Law firms hire good writers! You should also take advanced procedure courses or state specific procedure courses. Procedure courses are the most important courses you will ever take because they are the framework within which you must practice. Unlike *My Cousin Vinny*, you cannot always learn procedure as you go along!

**Don't be afraid of post-graduation internships.** If you are still looking for work after graduation, get an internship, especially in the month before bar results come out. Many government and nonprofit groups welcome unpaid labor. Try to secure an internship in a field you are interested in. You’ll make connections and learn valuable skills related to an area. But be upfront that you will be interviewing for other (paid) positions. You should also research if your school offers any stipend programs. Many law schools will provide stipends for up to a year (or more) for students who intern for a government or nonprofit entity.

**Schedule coffee or lunch meetings.** Email attorneys in the area early on to ask for informational coffees or lunches - a lot can be gained from asking questions and you never know who knows who when it comes to career opportunities. Make sure your email does not come across as a form email -- where it is obvious that you just switched out the person’s name and firm name. Make the email seem like you specifically targeted this person because of XYZ and want to learn more about ABC. Look up alumni in the area to meet for coffee or lunch! The same benefit as above can be applied when you already have something in common. Remember that the attorney is giving up billable hours to meet with you. If the attorney can meet at X time, arrange your schedule the best you can to meet with him or her. Offer to pay if you scheduled the meeting (even though most attorneys will end up paying for you anyways) and follow up with a thank-you note (whether email or paper). Finally, pay it forward--congrats, you’ve landed an amazing job!
Now when you receive an invite to coffee from someone who is now in your former job-seeking stage, don’t delete that email--be open to meeting.
Section 2 - Bar Application Information and Deadlines

The Application to take the North Carolina Bar Exam (“Application”) is an online, fillable form. The North Carolina Board of Law Examiners administers the application and testing processes.

The North Carolina State Bar (“Exam”) is a two-day test. The first day consists of twelve essay questions testing North Carolina specific law (60% of your score), and the second day consists of multiple choice questions, known as the Multistate Bar Examination (“MBE”) (40% of your score). The essay portion may cover the following subjects: Business Associations (including agency, corporations, and partnerships), Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Evidence, Family Law, Legal Ethics, Real Property, Secured Transactions including The Uniform Commercial Code, Taxation, Torts, Trusts, Wills, Decedents' Estates, and Equity.  

The passing score is 350. The Exam is offered twice a year—once in the latter half of February and once in the latter half of July.


Locations
The Board typically offers the Exam at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds and the Jane S. McKimmon Center at North Carolina State University.

It is good practice to test-drive your route to the testing location the night before the Exam. Leave far earlier than you need—traffic, accidents, down trees—all could affect your ability to make it to the Exam on time.

1 DISCLAIMER: The information presented herein should not be substituted for official instructions from the North Carolina Board of Law Examiners (“NCBLE”). All North Carolina Bar Exam Applicants should be sure to check the NCBLE website prior to submitting any bar exam applications for the official instructions.

2 In October 2016, the North Carolina Board of Law Examiners approved the adoption of the Uniform Bar Exam (“UBE”). This vote is still subject to approval by both the North Carolina State Bar and the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. If approved, North Carolina will begin administering the UBE in February 2019. For more information about the UBE, please visit: www.ncbex.org/exams/ube/.
Submitting the Application
The Board provides its instructions at: https://ncble.org/application-information/general-applications/instructions/.

Although the Application is completed online, you must print it out and mail it to the Board. In addition, you must have the Application notarized. Usually, your local bank offers free notary services.

You also will need to have four references (if you have not been barred before). Plan ahead for whom you expect to ask and provide addressed and stamped envelopes for your references to mail their recommendation forms (Certificate of Moral Character) to the Board. Be sure to follow-up with a note of appreciation.

The Application will ask for your past addresses and employment history. This may take longer to compile than you realize, so start working on this as soon as you can. Digging up past dorm addresses and summer internship information from college can be tricky!

The Application requires you to submit several additional items as attachments to your Application (see https://ncble.org/application-information/general-applications/instructions/), including:

- A certified copy of your birth certificate. You can call your birth state’s vital records department to obtain this.
- Two sets of completed fingerprint cards with an Authority for Release of Information Form. You have to submit a written request to the Board (info@ncble.org).
  - Be on the lookout for updates from your school—the University’s police department may come to the law school to take fingerprints.
- A copy of any litigation to which you are or have been a party.
• Official transcripts from all of your undergraduate schools.

• N.B.: Your undergraduate university must send these transcripts directly to the Board.

• The Character and Fitness Application is available here: https://ncble.org/application-information/general-applications/ncbe-online-character-fitness-application/

• The Board will inform the candidate of this interview by mail, so ensure your address is up-to-date with the Board. The Board could schedule the interview as late as the day before the bar exam. The interview will be informal in nature, with local attorneys questioning you about any law school debt you may have and your plan to pay it off and any arrests or misconduct incidents you may have disclosed on your Application. Remember to dress appropriately--you can never go wrong with a suit.

• For a better understanding of the character and fitness requirements for the bar, review: https://ncble.org/character-fitness/.

• Additional Forms: You may have to fill out and submit additional forms if you answered in the affirmative to certain questions on the Application, such as whether you have ever filed bankruptcy or if you have a history of criminal charges (yes, this includes traffic offenses!).

• Additional forms are available here: https://ncble.org/application-information/general-applications/additional-forms/.

• Ensure the Board has received a copy of your MPRE score (and remember that you must have taken the MPRE within the past two years of the exam).

Note the stringent restrictions, from what you can bring into the exam to what you are allowed to wear (no jackets with pockets!). The Board warns, “If you violate any of the above paragraphs, it will be presumed you have been cheating, your examination results will be sealed; and you will be directed to appear before the Board in regard to your Character and Fitness.” Even the slightest, and inadvertent, violation will lead to the Board sealing your results.

Keep in mind that the Application is a continuing application in the sense that you have an ongoing duty to supplement your Application if you are involved in or something happens that affects your prior submission or that needs to be disclosed to the Board. The best policy is always honest, open, and full disclosure when it comes to the Application.

**Deadlines**
Be aware of how early North Carolina’s Application deadlines are (2017 examples, check online for your year’s deadlines):

**February 2017:**
- Timely Filing: Postmark date October 4, 2016
- Late Filing: Postmark date November 1, 2016

**July 2017:**
- Timely Filing: Postmark date January 3, 2017
- Late Filing: Postmark date March 7, 2017

While North Carolina law schools publish and remind their students about upcoming dates, your out-of-state law school may not publish state-specific deadlines. For instance, Tennessee bar candidates can still timely submit their application in late May for the July test session, so don’t be misled by fellow students talking about much later filing dates. The best course of action is to make a deadline chart the beginning of your 3L year.
To be considered timely “filed,” the Board must receive your Application by the deadline, or your Application must be postmarked on or before the deadline. Note that your Application must be complete with all required signatures, notarizations, and attachments for the Board to consider it “filed.”

To ensure that your Application was received, mail it using a delivery notification service such as FedEx. Or, if you are in town over winter break, hand-deliver it to be safe!

**Laptop Use**
Review https://ncble.org/laptop-use/instructions/. There is a fee ($125) for using your laptop since you have to download specific software. There is also a separate application you need to submit. Check the Board’s website for the laptop application deadline, as this will be a different deadline from the primary Application’s deadline.

**Fees**
Be cognizant of the costs—they add up quickly! From laptop fees to fingerprinting, vital records, transcripts, late filing, and incomplete Application fees, you need to budget accordingly. Review https://ncble.org/application-information/fees/ for a full summary of the costs involved. For example, a timely-filed Application for a non-licensed applicant costs $700.00, while a late deadline filing for the same application would cost $950.00.

**Timeline**
The Board will mail your results approximately four weeks after the exam. Yes, this means that the test-takers will find out their scores at different times. After a few weeks, the Board will post publicly the results online. You will receive your license approximately four to six weeks after the exam. After you receive your license, you will need to be sworn-in. Visit https://ncble.org/swearingin/ and https://www.ncbar.gov/for-lawyers/faqs/ for details.

**Pro-tip:** Understand the fact that anything (really, anything!) could happen at the bar exam, and mentally prepare yourself. Past bar takers have dealt with mice running over their feet, power outages, and the failure of the
laptop software to timely upload the finished exam to the Board (test takers from this exam received $90.00 from a class action lawsuit).
Section 3 - Early Practice Tips

1. Find an area of law that interests you, fits your personality, and meets your future goals.

2. Be aware of changing trends in the industry and which fields may be phased out. Try to position yourself to practice an area of law that will not be taken over by fillable forms on a computer.

3. Being a successful attorney means being a good writer.

4. Continue taking good notes as you did in law school, whether during a brief phone call, in another attorney’s office, or at CLEs.

5. Offer to help partners with CLE presentations. This is a good way to learn basics of a practice area or the more nuanced side of one if a more targeted CLE.

6. Find a balance between work and your personal life.

7. Never be afraid to ask questions. But always do your own research first--asking a question to which a simple Google search would have provided an answer often reflects poorly on you.

8. Maintain a willingness to adapt to differing styles from different assigning attorneys, and learn how different styles can be equally effective. Keep track of how each attorney prefers work to be completed--whether it’s how they like documents to be titled in the firm’s system, how filed pleadings are emailed to clients, or how documents should be formatted.

9. Get involved in your firm--join a committee, go to happy hours, get to know the people you work with.

10. If your firm has a blog, volunteer to write an article and post it on your LinkedIn account. Writing articles is a good way to research a particular area, and it also advertises to your LinkedIn connections that you are knowledgeable in this area.
11. Sign up for legal updates in your practice area and in the North Carolina legal field at large.

12. Find ways to get involved in your community. Don’t be a passive member--seek out leadership positions.

13. Be a true team worker -- never put down someone else in the firm to try to make yourself look better. Always offer to help if another associate has a question.

14. Maintain the strong relationships from law school and continue to develop networking skills.

15. Ask partners early on how you can work on client development.

16. Treat the staff well. Likely, they have been there much longer than you have and know the ins and outs of the firm. They will be valuable resources.

17. Always ask for deadlines. When you get handed multiple assignments from various attorneys, it will help you to prioritize the work (and hopefully cut back on late nights at the office).

18. Understand what resources your firm has access to and what is in your firm’s library. For instance, in addition to Westlaw and Lexis, Practical Law is incredibly useful as is Gray’s.
Section 4 - Must-Sees’ and Must-Do’s in North Carolina

There are many fun things to do in North Carolina besides working as a lawyer. Here are a few North Carolina treasures.

**Biltmore Estate**
This massive estate, started by George Washington Vanderbilt II, is located in Asheville, NC. Biltmore Estate was the largest private family home in North America. Now it is a breathtaking tourist location and the hub of Pisgah National Forest. Stay in a bed and breakfast near the estate or at a hotel on the estate itself and take a tour of this beautiful and historic home and grounds. The gardens are amazing, and you can even join in on some wine tasting.

For more information, please visit: [http://www.biltmore.com/](http://www.biltmore.com/).

**The Lost Colony of Roanoke**
Dare County in North Carolina is where Roanoke, the Lost Colony of pilgrim folklore was located. Each summer, the community puts on the nation’s longest symphonic drama that retells the story surrounding the Lost Colony and the first English child born in the New World, Virginia Dare.

For more information, please visit: [https://www.outerbanks.org/things-to-do/attractions/historic-museums-sites/lost-colony/](https://www.outerbanks.org/things-to-do/attractions/historic-museums-sites/lost-colony/).
**The Wright Brothers’ National Memorial**
Wilbur and Orville Wright achieved the first successful airplane flight on December 17, 1903, near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The National Memorial commemorating their achievement is in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. There you can get a taste of what life was like for the Wright Brothers at the turn of the 20th Century. You can learn about what makes the miracle of flight possible and just exactly what the Wright Brothers did to achieve it.

For more information, please visit: [https://www.nps.gov/wrbr/index.htm](https://www.nps.gov/wrbr/index.htm).

**Edmunds Penn’s Grave**
Historic Greensboro is quaint and quiet most of the year, but the place really comes to life during the summer tourist season. There are multiple museums and various tours and shows going on almost all the time. And if that isn’t enough to keep you interested, you can hunt for John Edmunds Penn’s grave. He is one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and was a powerful advocate for freedom. Feel free to read more about Edmund Penn at [http://www.dsdi1776.com/signers-by-state/john-penn/](http://www.dsdi1776.com/signers-by-state/john-penn/).

**Clyde Jones’s Critters**
This is a fairly well-kept North Carolina secret, but should you go to this sweet man’s home in Bynum, North Carolina, and find his guestbook, you will quickly understand that Clyde Jones is well known around the world. He creates what he calls “Critters” out of scrap wood he finds using a chainsaw. These Critters are meant for children, and he loves and encourages kids to climb and play on them. The Critters resemble just about any animal you
can think of, from horses to dinosaurs. If he really likes you, he might let you take one home. Of course, there is also ClydeFest every year (late September) where kids can create some art and adults can bid on a Critter Clyde Jones will make right on the spot.

For more information, please visit: http://www.carrboro.com/clyde/ and http://gradschool.unc.edu/funding/gradschool/weiss/interesting_place/lifestyles/jones.html.

**The USS North Carolina**

The USS North Carolina was the lead ship of North Carolina-class battleships and the fourth warship in the U.S. Navy to be named for the State of North Carolina. She was the first newly constructed American battleship to enter service during World War II and took part in every major naval offensive in the Pacific Theater of Operations. Her 15 battle stars made her the most decorated American battleship of World War II. She is now a museum ship and memorial kept at the seaport of Wilmington, North Carolina.

For more information, please visit: http://www.battleshipnc.com/.
Thank you for taking the time to read this manual. We hope that it has been an enlightening experience. If you would like more information about becoming a North Carolina lawyer, please be sure to check out the following resources:

- NCBA LinkedIn: [https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1310847/profile](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1310847/profile)
- NCBA Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/NCBAorg](https://www.facebook.com/NCBAorg)
- NCBA Twitter: [https://twitter.com/NCBAorg](https://twitter.com/NCBAorg)

We wish you the best of luck in law school, on the bar exam, and in your future practice of the law!