

# University of Tennessee College of Law

## Guidelines for the Timing of Offers and Decisions

The University of Tennessee College of Law (“UT Law”) has adopted standards to promote fair and ethical practices among students and employers for the interviewing and decision-making process, in the form of the following guidelines for the timing of employment offers and decisions.

UT Law is a member of NALP, and follows the NALP Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruiting Process. Please see this link for the full text. UT Law’s Guidelines are intended to further the values expressed in the NALP Principles.

The overarching goal of these Guidelines is to foster and encourage communication between students and employers over the course of the recruiting process. If any students or employers have questions or concerns, they are encouraged to contact UT Law Career Center staff.

### A. General Provisions

1. “Offers” as contemplated by these Guidelines, can be made verbally, via email, or by mailed letter, but written offers are highly encouraged in order to avoid miscommunication and ambiguity. When both a verbal and a written offer are made, the date of the written offer controls for purposes of timing under these Guidelines.
2. All Offers to law student candidates (“Candidates”) should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the Offer unless the Offer is made pursuant to Sections B and C below, in which case the later response date should apply.
3. Employers of fewer than 20 total attorneys are exempted from Sections B, C, and D below; all Offers from these employers should be left open for at least two weeks.
4. Employers offering part-time or temporary positions for the school term (i.e. not summer associate positions) are exempted from the requirements of Sections B, C, and D below.
5. Candidates are expected to accept or release Offers or request an extension by the applicable deadline. Offers that are not accepted by the offer deadline may expire.
6. A Candidate should not hold open more than five Offers of employment at any one time. For each Offer received that places a candidate over the offer limit, the candidate should, within one week of receipt of the excess Offer, release an Offer.
7. Practices inconsistent with these guidelines should be reported to the Career Center staff.

### B. Full-Time Employment Provisions

1. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation should leave those Offers open for at least 14 days following the date of the Offer or until October 1, whichever comes later. Candidates should reaffirm these Offers within 14 days from the date of the Offer, if an employer requests such reaffirmation in its Offer. Employers that have requested this reaffirmation may retract any Offer that is not reaffirmed within the 14-day period.
2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer’s Offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one Offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.

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### C. Summer Employment Provisions for Second Year Students

1. Employers offering positions for the following summer should leave those Offers open for at least 21 days following the date of the Offer or until September 1, whichever comes later. Candidates should reaffirm these Offers within 14 days from the date of the Offer, if an employer requests such affirmation in its Offer. Employers that have requested this reaffirmation may retract any Offer that is not reaffirmed within the 14-day period.
2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer's Offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one Offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.
3. Dual degree students who are in their second or subsequent year of law classes should be treated as second year students.

### D. Summer Employment Provisions for First Year Students

1. Recognizing that opportunities to learn about professionalism, professional development, and the legal profession are appropriate early in law school, educational and professional development contact with first year students is permitted at any time during the first year of law school. Prospective employers and first year law students, however, should not initiate contact with one another and employers should not initiate formal one-on-one recruiting contact with one another, including applications, interviews, or Offers to first year students, before October 15. Appointments with Candidates for interviews should be established for a mutually convenient time so as not to unduly disrupt Candidates' studies.
2. All Offers to first year students for summer employment should remain open for at least two weeks after the date made, or until March 1, whichever comes later.
3. Dual degree students who have not begun their second year of law classes should be treated as first year students.

The Chart below is presented as a simplified way to represent the primary deadlines contemplated by the above Guidelines:

Employment Type	Student Type	Acceptance Deadline
Summer Employment	1L	Later of 14 days from Offer or March 1
	2Ls	Later of 21 days from Offer or September 1
Post-Graduate Employment	3Ls	Later of 14 days from Offer or Oct. 1
Summer or Post-Graduate at Employer of <20 attorneys	ALL	14 days from Offer