

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Law Clerk Hiring Endorsing a Law Clerk Hiring Plan for 2004

After reviewing an assessment of the 2003 Law Clerk Hiring Plan and conferring with their colleagues, the members of the [Ad Hoc Committee on Law Clerk Hiring](#) conferred by conference call on December 15, 2003, to finalize a proposal of a Law Clerk Hiring Plan for 2004. This memorandum memorializes the agreement reached during the course of the Committee's deliberations on December 15:

- There was widespread approval of the 2003 Plan. By all accounts, the 2003 Plan was a great success. A vast majority of federal judges honored the September 2 ("day after Labor Day") starting date; the law schools' support of the Plan was nearly unanimous; and the information that judges received from law clerk applicants was vastly superior to the information that we have received in the recent past.
- A slightly amended version of the 2003 Law Clerk Hiring Plan should be adopted for 2004.
- Under the 2004 Plan, there should be a two-week "reading period" during which law clerk applications can be received, sorted, and reviewed by chambers, before interviews are held.
- Law schools should be strongly encouraged to have students submit all of their application materials (*i.e.*, including sealed letters of reference) in one mailing. At a minimum, law schools should require faculty members who send letters of reference under separate cover to mark the envelopes with a notation, "LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR [APPLICANT'S NAME]."
- The law schools should be encouraged to counsel applicants against sending out scores of applications. In some instances, judges were told that law schools had advised students to send out at least 90 applications. Students need to be more realistic and reasonable in deciding how many applications to send out.
- The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts should be encouraged to develop a system to accommodate the electronic filing of applications for judges who might be interested in using such a system.
- As a general matter, the "hiring period" under the Law Clerk Hiring Plan is in the Fall.
- With these understandings, and until further amendment, the Committee agrees that the new Law Clerk Hiring Plan for federal judges should be as indicated in the [Summary of the Plan](#).