

Court Clerk

Run the paperwork that makes a courtroom work. A government job you can reach straight out of high school.

TYPICAL PAY

\$48,700

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$36k to \$74k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**County courthouses, city halls,
state trial courts, federal courtho...**

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma or GED (General Educational Development certificate)** Grade 12
 This is the minimum in most courts. Typing speed, accuracy and a clean record matter more than grades.
- 2 Optional two-year degree or certificate** 0 to 2 years
 An associate degree in paralegal studies, criminal justice or office administration. It is not required, but it lifts you above other applicants for the same posting.
- 3 Apply for a posted vacancy** Weeks to months
 Court jobs are advertised by the county, the state court administrator or the federal judiciary. Expect a typing and data entry test and a background check.
- 4 On the job training** Months
 You learn the case management software, the local rules and the filing codes. Anywhere from a few days to a year depending on the court.
- 5 Move up** Years
 Clerk, then senior or lead clerk, courtroom deputy, division supervisor, and eventually clerk of court, which runs the whole office.

Pros and cons

- + You can be earning within months of finishing high school
- + Business hours, no nights, no travel
- + Public retirement plan and loan forgiveness for government service
- Starting pay is modest and raises follow a slow public grade ladder
- Repetitive, detail-heavy work where small mistakes matter
- Angry and upset members of the public come to your counter

Optional boosts

Court management certification. Paralegal certificate. Case management system skills. Court interpreter credential.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Court, Municipal, and License Clerks
 National Association for Court Management
 National Center for State Courts
 United States Courts: careers in the federal judiciary

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/court-clerk>

Good to know

Almost every case is a state case

The National Center for State Courts reports that around 98% of all cases in the country are filed in state courts, roughly 70 million of them in 2024. Federal courts get the headlines; state and county cou...

The clerk of court is an elected job in many counties

In a number of states the head of the office is not appointed but elected by voters, alongside the sheriff and the district attorney. Staff clerks are ordinary hires, but the boss may have run a campaign.



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