



## **HANDBOOK**

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## **I. INFORMATION ABOUT LEGAL CORPS**

The University of Miami School of Law Legal Corps (Legal Corps) is an ambitious, postgraduate fellowship program that provides public interest organizations, government agencies, and the judiciary with bar certified, legal talent. Designed to further Miami Law's strong commitment to public service, Legal Corps affords underfunded and understaffed public sector legal agencies, at no cost, the benefit of diverse and talented recent Miami Law graduates. The program also advances the school's dedication to its graduates.

### ***A. Who Can Apply for a Legal Corps Fellowship?***

University of Miami School of Law J.D. graduates may submit an application for a Legal Corps Fellowship within one year of graduation and must also commence their Fellowship within that same year. As a prerequisite to applying, graduates must be admitted to a state bar or must be awaiting "character and fitness" results to be sworn-in in the immediate future. In order to commence a fellowship with a host organization, the Fellow must be admitted to a state bar.

Legal Corps reserves the right to make the final determination as to the applicants' acceptance relating to issues regarding final "character and fitness" results, current employment status and other selection criteria as defined herein.

### ***B. What is the Duration of the Legal Corps Fellowship?***

The duration of the Legal Corps Fellowship shall not exceed a period of six months. If a Legal Corps Fellow secures permanent employment during the term of the Fellowship and it is deemed unfeasible to continue with the Fellowship, the Fellow may terminate the Fellowship prior to the expiration of the six-month term, only after consulting with Legal Corps and with the Fellow's host organization and after providing timely and appropriate notice. Fellows must participate in an exit interview at the conclusion of the Fellowship. Please note that Fellows may not re-enlist in Legal Corps once the Fellowship is terminated.

### ***C. What Placement Opportunities are Available to Legal Corps Fellows?***

Placement opportunities are available at public interest organizations, judicial chambers, and government agencies nationwide. Please refer to the *Legal Corps Host Organization*

*Catalog* available at [www.law.miami.edu/legalcorps](http://www.law.miami.edu/legalcorps) for a current listing of placement opportunities.

With Legal Corps' prior approval, selected applicants may secure placement opportunities with eligible host organizations not included in the *Legal Corps Hosts Organization Catalog*. Applicants are responsible for conducting their own due diligence regarding fellowship placements not listed in the catalog.

#### ***D. What Benefits are available to Legal Corps Fellows?***

- Fellows will receive a \$2,500 stipend per-month throughout the term of the Fellowship, not to exceed six months.
- Fellows will participate in professional development workshops and, depending on the requirements of the Fellows' state bar, will receive continuing legal education (CLE) credits for each professional development workshop they participate in. Fellows outside the South Florida area will participate in the workshops via alternative formats. Dates and times of the CLE workshops will be announced at the commencement of the Fellowship.
- Fellows will receive career development assistance, including counseling in securing a permanent position outside the Fellowship. Please note that host organizations are not expected to offer permanent employment to the Fellow at the conclusion of the Fellowship.

#### ***E. What are the Requirements of the Legal Corps Fellowship?***

- Fellows must satisfactorily comply with the requirements set forth in the *Legal Corps Handbook*.
- Fellows must meet the host organization's expectations, including professionally carrying out any responsibilities assigned to Fellows by the host organizations.
- On the first (1st), third (3rd) and fifth (5th) months of their fellowships, Fellows must submit a Bi-Monthly Evaluation Report. The report will be due on the first (1st) business day of each bi-month when a written report is due. The report must include the attached Bi-Monthly Evaluation Report Cover sheet, must be typed and must not exceed three (3) pages. Fellows will address the questions listed in the cover sheet. The Fellows' goals and expectations, addressed in the cover sheet, should be different each month. During months where written reports are not due (i.e., the second (2nd), fourth

(4th) and sixth (6th) months of the fellowship), Fellows will participate in a bi-monthly Skype or teleconference with Legal Corps. Legal Corps will contact the Fellows to schedule same.

#### ***F. How Do Graduates Apply for a Legal Corps Fellowship?***

Candidates interested in applying to Legal Corps should review the Legal Corps Handbook and submit a Legal Corps Application pursuant to the guidelines set forth herein. Eligible applications will be submitted to the candidate's selected host organization(s) for consideration and if chosen to interview, the candidate will be required to interview with the host organization(s). Application steps are as follows:

- Each applicant must submit an electronic application and supporting documentation by e-mail to: legalcorps@law.miami.edu.
- Applicants may apply to a maximum of five (5) host organizations from the *Legal Corps Host Organization Catalog*. If seeking approval for a possible placement at a host organization not included in the Legal Corps catalog, the applicant must include the name and contact information for such host organization in the designated section of the application.

Specific instructions for completing the application are set forth in the *Guide to the Legal Corps Application Process*, included in the *Legal Corps Handbook*.

#### ***G. What is the Review Process for Legal Corps Fellowship Applications?***

Legal Corps will only consider complete applications submitted by eligible graduates. The selection process will take into account the following factors: (1) the applicant's commitment to public service and to the mission and requirements of Legal Corps; (2) the applicant's experience and skills; (3) the applicant's preliminary Legal Corps interview; (4) the applicant's academic record and character; and (5) the applicant's ability to secure a fellowship placement.

After reviewing the applications, Legal Corps will submit the applications to the host organizations selected by the applicants. At their discretion, host organizations will contact applicants for interviews. Final placements with host organizations will be offered at the host organizations' discretion.

## ***H. Additional Important Information Regarding Legal Corps Fellowships***

- Fellowships do not offer any health, retirement, or other benefits.
- As soon as possible, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact professional organizations such as the American Bar Association – offering insurance benefits through UnitedHealthcare (<https://www.uhcsr.com/ABA>) and Assurant Health (<https://www.abiins.com/individual.htm>) – the University of Miami Alumni Association – offering insurance benefits through Marsh Affinity Group (<https://www.getmednow.com>) – their undergraduate alumni associations, and their state bars to inquire about insurance benefits available through such organizations.
- The availability of a Fellowship is offered contingent upon Fellows presentation of proof of work authorization and/or U.S. citizenship, and completing Form I-9, as required by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. This federal law requires that the University of Miami verify, for citizens and non-citizens alike, the identity and authorization to work.
- Fellows will not be able to start their Fellowships until such time as they have completed Form I-9 online and presented acceptable documents in person to the Office of Faculty Affairs to establish their identity and work authorization. Furthermore, please be advised that continuation of the Fellowships is contingent upon the continuation of the Fellows' authorization to work, as required by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Further information regarding this process will be provided to applicants once the applicants have received placement offers.
- Fellows selected by host organizations for placements should not accept placement offers they do not intend to keep. Consequences, including automatic withdrawal from Legal Corps, will be imposed on Fellows who do not keep their commitments and adhere to Legal Corps' requirements and deadlines.
- Fellows will not be compensated for any volunteer work that occurs before the Fellowship commences or after the Fellowship terminates.
- Applicants who live in locations that do not have at least one approved host organization must contact Legal Corps as soon as possible.
- The University of Miami and Legal Corps reserve the right to immediately terminate the fellowship and to cease making Fellowship payments to Fellows in the event of an occurrence of any unforeseen circumstance surrounding Legal Corps.

- In the event that Legal Corps is terminated at any time, Legal Corps, the University of Miami, its officers, directors, employees, representatives, and agents, shall have no liability to Fellows (and/or Host Organizations) in connection with the program. Moreover, Legal Corps, the University of Miami School of Law, its officers, directors, employees, representatives, and agents, shall be held harmless and indemnified by Fellows (and/or Host Organizations) from any and all liability, loss, damage, cost or expense, including reasonable attorneys fees and expenses (whether or not litigation is commenced), paid or incurred as result thereof.

### ***I. Contact Information and Inquiries***

For further information regarding Legal Corps, please contact:

#### **Legal Corps**

3000 Biscayne Boulevard  
Suite 100  
Ph: (305) 284-8011  
Fax: (305) 576-9343  
Email: [legalcorps@law.miami.edu](mailto:legalcorps@law.miami.edu)  
Website: [www.law.miami.edu/legalcorps](http://www.law.miami.edu/legalcorps)

#### **Tamesha Keel**

Director  
[tkeel@law.miami.edu](mailto:tkeel@law.miami.edu)

#### **Melissa Fernandez-Stiers**

Director of Educational Programming &  
Professional Development  
[mstiers@law.miami.edu](mailto:mstiers@law.miami.edu)

#### **Maria "Luly" Chisholm**

Senior Administrative Assistant  
[mchisholm@law.miami.edu](mailto:mchisholm@law.miami.edu)

## II. GUIDE TO THE LEGAL CORPS APPLICATION PROCESS

To participate in Legal Corps, applicants must complete: (1) a one-page Legal Corps Fellowship Application (“Application”), available in the *Legal Corps Handbook*; (2) select or “bid” on a maximum of five possible host organization placements via Symplicity, a web-based recruiting program used by Legal Corps; and (3) select a date and time to participate in a preliminary interview with Legal Corps by visiting the option labeled “Mandatory Legal Corps Interviews” on Symplicity.

Detailed instructions regarding Symplicity and the bidding process are contained in the *Legal Corps Handbook* section entitled, “Guide to Symplicity.”

### A. *Applications to Host Organizations Listed in the Legal Corps Host Organization Catalog*

Applicants seeking placements with one of the organizations participating in Legal Corps must:

1. Complete Sections I, II, IV, and V of the Application;
2. List no more than **five (5)** organizations for submission of application materials in Section II; and
3. Bid and upload the required, supplemental materials for the desired placements on Symplicity.

Host organization information, as well as specific application instructions and requirements, can be found in the *Legal Corps Host Organization Catalog*.

### B. *Applicants with Existing Fellowship Placements*

Applicants who have obtained a fellowship placement with a pre-approved host organization must:

1. Complete Sections I, III, IV, and V of the Application;
2. Select the “Existing Legal Corps Offer/Placement” tab in Symplicity.

**Please note that applicants with existing, pre-approved placements are not to bid on additional placements.**

**C. Applications to Host Organizations Not Listed in the Legal Corps Host Organization Catalog**

Only with prior approval, applicants may obtain their own placements with eligible organizations not currently participating in Legal Corps. Applicants whose host organization has not been previously approved must complete Sections I, III, IV, and V of the Legal Corps Application and clearly indicate that they are seeking placement approval.

**D. Application Submission**

The completed *Legal Corps Fellowship Application* must be signed and dated by the applicant. Scanned signatures are acceptable. No electronic signatures please.

The *Legal Corps Fellowship Application* must be submitted electronically to [legalcorps@law.miami.edu](mailto:legalcorps@law.miami.edu).

**Incomplete or incorrect applications will not be considered.**

### III. GUIDE TO SYMPPLICITY

#### A. *Introduction to Symplicity*

Symplicity is a web-based recruiting program used by Legal Corps to administer Fellow placements with host organizations. All Miami Law graduates have a unique login that allows them to access the Symplicity site. If you do not have your login information, please email [legalcorps@law.miami.edu](mailto:legalcorps@law.miami.edu) and provide your full name, Cane I.D., and email address (this email address will be your username for the site). You will then receive your login information via email. Please allow up to two business days for a response.

Once you log onto Symplicity, you are free to change your password to something you will remember. To change your password, click on “Profile” and then select the “Change Password” tab.

#### B. *Navigating Symplicity*

To log onto Symplicity, visit: <http://law-miami-csm.symplicity.com/students> and enter your username and password. Please review the Symplicity homepage for important information (found under “Announcements”).

The “Alerts” section of the homepage will inform you of any action you need to take on Symplicity.

#### C. *Building a Personal Profile*

To build your profile, click on the “Profile” link on the top navigational bar. Click on the various tabs to fill in important personal information. It is to your benefit that you complete as much of your personal profile as possible.

Under the “Personal Information” tab, please **fill in or update your email address and other contact information**. This is important information for Legal Corps to have as we may need to contact you on short notice regarding important matters.

**Under the “Academic Information” tab, please review your graduation date and year in school. This information must be correct. Otherwise you will not be able to bid on host organizations for Legal Corps.**

#### D. *Managing Documents*

To view existing or upload new documents (resumes, cover letters, unofficial transcripts, and writing samples), click on the “Documents” link on the top navigational bar.

**You must upload documents before you can bid for Fall 2011 Legal Corps host organizations.** To add a new document, click on the “Add New” button. Enter a

document title in the “label” field and select a document type. Click on the “Browse” button to select a file to upload and then click the “Submit” button.

If you upload more than one version of a document (i.e. more than one resume), you will be asked to designate a default version. The default version will be your first option when applying to host organizations. When bidding for host organizations, you will have the opportunity to select a version other than the default version.

### ***E. Viewing Participating Host Organizations***

Prior to bidding, you may view a list of the host organizations participating in the Fall 2011 Legal Corps Program by clicking on “OCI, Resume Referral, Direct Contact, and Externship Program Schedules” from the top navigation bar.

Select “Fall 2011 Legal Corps Session (For May 2011 Graduates Only)” and click on “Search.” To view the host organizations, click on the “Review” button next to the host organization’s name to view specific information about an organization’s participation. **Please read the information provided for each host organization as some host organizations may have specific bidding instructions that must be followed.** You can utilize the search filters to filter the host organization list further.

### ***F. Bidding on Host Organizations***

All applicants will have a total of six bids, which includes five bids for potential placements with host organizations and one bid to schedule a brief, preliminary Legal Corps interview.

To begin the bidding process, click on “OCI, Resume Referral, Direct Contact, and Externship Program Schedules” from the top navigation bar and then select “Employers/Bidding.” Select “Fall 2011 Legal Corps Session (For May 2011 Graduates Only)” to see a list of participating host organizations. To bid on a host organization, click on the “Apply” button. Again, please be sure to **note any specific bidding instructions listed.**

*The default versions of your documents will be included in your bid unless you choose otherwise.* To change the specific version of your documents, click on the “Review” button and use the drop down menus on the right-hand side to select the appropriate version. While in this “Review” mode, you will have the option to list your preferred locations in the event your host organization has more than one office. **You do not need to fill out this portion of your bid unless specifically asked by a host organization. However, if a host organization has multiple offices and you would like to state an office preference, you may do so in this section.**

If you make any changes to your bid, including changing document versions or adding preferred locations, you must click the “Update” button in order for the changes to be processed.

You may review your bid at any time by clicking on the “Review” button. You may also withdraw your bid at any time while in the “Review” mode.

**For Legal Corps applicants with existing, pre-approved placements, please select the “Legal Corps Existing Offer/Placements” tab. Then follow the instructions outlined in Subsection H below to select a Legal Corps interview date and time. Do not bid for additional placements with host organizations!**

### ***G. Preliminary Legal Corps Interviews***

All Legal Corps applicants must schedule a 15 minute, preliminary interview on Symplicity. These preliminary interviews will be held at the Legal Corps office for local applicants and telephonically for applicants outside of the South Florida area. Please note that this interview is separate from the interviews that will be conducted by the host organizations. To schedule an interview, please follow the instructions outlined in **Section H below.**

### ***H. Scheduling Preliminary Legal Corps Interviews***

To arrange for an interview, click on “OCI, Resume Referral, Direct Contact, and Externship Program Schedules” from the top navigation bar, select “Employers/Bidding” and then “Fall 2011 Legal Corps Session (For December May 2011 Graduates Only).” From the list of host organizations displayed, select the “Mandatory Legal Corps Interview” tab based upon the specific date you would like to interview and choose the desired time and interview method. Please note that in-person interviews for local applicants will be held at the Legal Corps office and telephone interviews will be conducted for applicants outside of the South Florida area.

### ***I. Using the Job Posting Section of Symplicity***

Occasionally, employers choose to advertise available positions on the job posting section of Symplicity. Graduates should continue to check the job posting section as well to ensure that no opportunities are missed.

To access these job postings, click on the “Job Postings” link on the top navigational bar. To narrow down your search, use the various drop down menus to select position type. You can also search by keywords. Once you are finished selecting your filters, click the “Search” button.

To view a specific job posting, click on the job title. This will bring up specific information about the available position including a job description, hiring criteria, application deadline and materials requested.

Employers are given the option to allow for online applications via Symplicity or to opt for traditional methods of application such as US mail, fax or email.

If an employer does allow for online applications, on the right hand side of the screen you will see a section called “Application Status.” To apply to an employer online, select the document versions you would like to submit to the employer and click “Submit.” Please note that you cannot submit an application unless you have at least one version of each document requested uploaded onto Symplicity.

If an employer opts to not allow for online applications, on the right hand side of the screen you will see a section called “How to Apply.” Here, you will see instructions on how to apply, whether via US mail, fax, email or another method.

You must submit your materials directly to the employers by their specified deadline in order to guarantee that the employer will receive and review your application.

**FALL 2011 LEGAL CORPS FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION**

Please complete and return to: [legalcorps@law.miami.edu](mailto:legalcorps@law.miami.edu)

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**I. APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cane I.D. #: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Month and Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

State Bar(s) Admitted To: \_\_\_\_\_ Bar Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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**II. LEGAL CORPS PLACEMENT PREFERENCES**

Please list up to five placements in which you are interested in applying to:

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ |          |

Applicants applying to host organizations through Legal Corps must submit a bid and upload the required, supplemental documents for each placement on Symplicity. Bidding instructions can be found in the Guide to Symplicity in the Legal Corps Handbook.

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**III. EXISTING PLACEMENT**  Seeking placement approval

If you have an existing, preapproved placement, please provide the following host organization information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Telephone & Email: \_\_\_\_\_

For purposes of bidding in Symplicity, please select the "Existing Legal Corps Placement" option. Do not bid for additional placements. If you would like to obtain placement approval for a host organization not already participating in Legal Corps, please provide the relevant contact information in this section and clearly indicate that you are seeking placement approval by checking the box above.

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**IV. LEGAL CORPS PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS**

Please note that all applicants must arrange for a brief interview with Legal Corps staff via Symplicity. This interview is separate from the interviews that the host organizations will conduct. To schedule a preliminary interview, please select the "Mandatory Legal Corps Interview" option based upon the specific date you would like to interview and choose the desired time and interview method. For local applicants, interviews will be conducted in person at the Legal Corps office. For applicants outside the South Florida area, interviews will be conducted telephonically.

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**V. APPLICANT SIGNATURE**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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