Callback Interview Guide
Career Development Office

You got a callback interview! Now what? Being selected for a callback interview means the employer has decided you have the credentials they are looking for, and they were impressed with your initial interview. Now they want to see whether you will be a good fit for their environment, and if their initial impression was correct. Respond promptly to the call, remain polite, considerate, and professional, and prepare for your next step!

A callback interview can take several forms. An employer might call you for an on-site interview after an on-campus screening interview through a recruitment program, after a screening interview that took place at the employer's office, or after a virtual initial interview. The on-site callback may involve a full-panel interview whereas your initial interview may have included one or two interviewers. Or, you may be asked to participate in a series of interviews, each of which may feature one or two interviewers. It is possible the employer will request you to undergo multiple callback interviews before determining whether to extend an offer of employment. This guide will help you prepare for your callback interview, no matter the format.

What to do when you get the call:

- **Respond promptly**: Employers expect a swift acknowledgement of their callback invitation (within 24 hours). If you need time to consider the callback invitation, let the employer know. If you do not respond in a timely fashion, both your own and the law school's reputations may be affected, and you may miss the opportunity.

- **When in doubt, ask!** Make sure you understand the time, place, and expected length of the interview. If you require any accommodations for the interview, advise the employer. If a question occurs to you after your conversation with the person who extended the invitation, call either that person or the recruitment coordinator.

- **Preparing for travel:** If the interview is in another city, some employers make travel arrangements for you or will put you in touch with their travel agent to make your plans. In other cases, you will need to make your arrangements and submit receipts for reimbursement. Other employers expect you to bear the expense of interview travel. When you schedule the interview, be prepared to ask and answer questions about your travel plans, and make sure you understand which expenses are your responsibility. Employers typically do not pay for spouse/partner travel, or for stays beyond the time necessary for the

interview. So, if the employer is making the arrangements, you must make your own separate arrangements for companions or an extended stay.

- **Research**! The employer may ask if you are interested in meeting with attorneys practicing within specific areas—be prepared for this question. And of course, know even more about the employer for the callback than you did for the initial interview, whether it was on campus, virtual, or at the employer's office.

- **Remain polite**. If something seems to go awry in the process, either with the scheduling of the callback or the interview itself, remain professional and cordial, and contact the CDO to report your concerns and ask for guidance.

- **Declining callbacks**: It is perfectly acceptable (and indeed preferable if you know you are not interested) to decline a callback offer. If you know you will decline the interview, it is especially important to respond promptly, so that another student may be offered the opportunity. Thank the employer for their interest in you. *You must decline a callback if you already have accepted employment.*

The on-site interview:

- **Be prepared.** The callback interview can be a much more intimidating prospect than the screening interview. You likely will meet with and be interviewed by many attorneys and staff members (whether formally or informally).

- **Bring extra copies of your materials**—including your resume, cover letter, writing sample, transcript and list of references—with you, in case you are asked for them. If your resume has been updated with new information, make sure you provide it. Bring your portfolio to keep papers, both those you bring and those that may be provided to you. Bring a pen to take notes between interview sessions (but keep it in your portfolio, not in your hands or in your pocket—employers notice if you are playing with your pen due to nervousness, and you don't want to spend the day with an inkblot on your clothes or hands).

- **Be polite**. Remember that each person you meet may be asked to give feedback about their interaction with you. Treat everyone with utmost respect—do not make assumptions about the person's role in the organization.

- **Impress**! Memorize the names of the people who will be conducting the interview if they are provided beforehand, and read their bios on the employer website (if available) so that you may ask questions about their work or experience. And memorize the names of any new people you meet, so that you may send thank you notes or emails to all.

- **Have questions prepared in advance.** If you are asked if you have any questions, ask one! Following up on something that one of the interviewers mentioned shows that you are paying attention and are interested. Ask questions that demonstrate how informed and prepared you are. Stating that you have no questions for an interviewer may suggest a lack of interest in the employer.

- **Some repetition is ok.** You may ask the same questions of different interviewers. Interviewers likely will have some of the same questions for you. These questions are only repetitive to you: it will be the first time each interviewer has heard your response, even if you receive the same question from multiple interviewers. Do not change the substance of what feel like repetitive responses, as your interviewers may compare notes as to how you responded to a particular question.

- **After your initial interview**, you may have realized there was something you wish you had said or asked, or an impression you wish to adjust—perhaps you found yourself saying "um" too many times. Now is your chance to say what you wished you'd said, or to present an even more professional demeanor—but remember to still be yourself.

- **Don't wear the same clothes!** You should wear business professional attire (i.e., a suit) regardless of the office's dress code. If you have only one suit, be sure your shirt or blouse, and tie or jewelry, are different. (It's not a bad idea to bring an extra shirt, tie, blouse, pair of panty hose for emergencies!) If you are traveling by airplane, do not pack your interview attire in luggage you plan to check.

- **Be prepared for a meal**. Employers like to see how candidates conduct themselves in a social setting. An employer may take you out for dinner the evening before your interview or lunch the day of your interview. This is your opportunity to find out more about the work setting, and to demonstrate how you might interact with co-workers if you were offered the position. Although this portion of the callback may seem less formal, it is, nonetheless, still an interview—so you still must conduct yourself carefully. Be wary of messy foods, and avoid alcohol. If you have dietary restrictions, mention them to the recruitment coordinator or the person who organized your visit.

- **Follow up with thank you notes!** Send emailed, typo-free thank you notes within 24 hours of your interview, and depending on the timing for offer decisions, you may also send a handwritten note by U.S. mail. Send emailed and handwritten thank you notes to each person who interviewed you. Make sure each one is individualized—your interviewers may compare notes!

- **Ask about next steps.** Ask when you should expect to hear about the employer's decision, or if there are any intermediary steps.

- **Check in with your references.** If an employer asked you to provide a list of references, ensure you check back in with your references, ensuring they have the most up-to-date copies of any materials you have shared with them. Employers are likely to reach out to references after your callback.

- **Cancelling your interview.** If you receive an offer prior to the interview (or know that you are not interested in accepting an offer), even if it is the same day as the interview, it is courteous to call to cancel rather than waste the interviewer's time.

Some employers may schedule virtual callback interviews, instead of on-site interviews. The same guidance applies to a virtual callback that applies to a virtual initial interview. Test your technology (meeting link, microphone, camera, sound, etc.) beforehand to ensure everything works. Make sure the background that will appear in your video frame is neat and professional. Speak clearly and smile to convey enthusiasm. Be prepared to stay seated through multiple interviews. If you must take a break between interviews, ensure you are back in your seat before the next interview begins.

POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES GOVERNING CALLBACKS

University of Richmond School of Law's Non-Discrimination Policy

Students are encouraged to report any employer conduct inconsistent with Richmond Law's Non-Discrimination Policy to the Associate Dean for Career Development. The policy states:

The University of Richmond prohibits discrimination and harassment against applicants, students, faculty or staff on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, ethnicity, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, military or veteran status or any classification protected by local, state, or federal law.

The services and facilities of the Career Development Office are available only to those employers whose practices are consistent with this policy. The representatives of any employer using these services and facilities, in doing so, affirm that the employer does not discriminate.

NALP Principles

The National Association for Law Placement (NALP) encourages employers and students to follow the best practices for recruitment outlined in their Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment Process. The Principles are intended to make the process

fair for all—students and employers alike. Although they are not mandatory, if an employer does not follow them, please let the CDO know. Be aware that most employers will also alert the CDO if a student has not followed the Principles.

Principles for students regarding scheduling and offers:

- Interview only with employers in which you have a genuine interest.
- Respond promptly to all requests or invitations from an employer.
- Adhere to all scheduling commitments, canceling only for good cause, and handle in a timely manner any changes or cancellations, including cancellation of any travel arrangements.
- Promptly communicate with employers and the CDO about your acceptance, rejection, or requests for deferrals of employment offers.
- Withdraw pending applications or cancel scheduled interviews with other employers after accepting an offer of employment.
- Hold open only a reasonable number of employment offers at any one time.
- Understand the employer's travel reimbursement policies before making your travel plans. Know what expenses are reimbursable, what ranges are considered reasonable, and keep your requests appropriate. Your receipts should be submitted promptly. If you interview with more than one employer during a single trip, establish beforehand which organization is reimbursing you for what portion of your expenses. The employer may give you a form to submit, or use the NALP form (see "Resources," below).

RESOURCES

Richmond Law Recruiting Policies for Students:
https://law.richmond.edu/career/_pdf/Recruiting_Policies_for_Students.pdf

Full text of NALP Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment Process:
https://www.nalp.org/fair_ethical_recruitment

NALP Principles for Students:
https://www.nalp.org/fair_ethical_recruitment#candidates

NALP Travel Expense Reimbursement Form:
https://www.nalp.org/uploads/2025PrintableNALPTravelExpenseReimbursementForm.pdf