

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS
FALL 2026 TRANSFER CANDIDATES:
BINDING EARLY DECISION AND REGULAR
DECISION

FILING PERIODS AND DEADLINES

Thank you for your interest in becoming a transfer candidate at Northwestern Law! We offer two opportunities to apply for transfer admission: Binding Early Decision – JD Transfer and Regular Decision – JD Transfer.

Binding Early Decision – JD Transfer

We encourage candidates who have identified Northwestern Law as their top choice for transfer admission to apply through our **Binding Early Decision – JD Transfer program**. Northwestern Law evaluates Early Decision – JD Transfer applications according to the same selection criteria as Regular Decision – JD Transfer applications. However, an Early Decision – JD Transfer applicant’s particular interest in Northwestern Law, evidenced by their Early Decision – JD Transfer application designation, is specially considered by the admissions committee. And because of the timing for the Binding Early Decision – JD Transfer program, the admissions committee will evaluate applicants’ performance for the first semester of law school. Otherwise, Early Decision – JD Transfer applicants do not have a significant advantage in the selection process.

This is a binding admission program. If admitted through the Early Decision – JD Transfer program, Early Decision applicants commit themselves to matriculating at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. Applicants may not apply to any other binding Early Decision – JD Transfer programs during the same transfer admission cycle. Early Decision – JD Transfer applicants may only apply to other law schools through those institutions’ regular decision

programs. **Please review the conditions for candidates admitted to the Early Decision – JD Transfer program** within the Binding Early Decision – JD Transfer Certification Form found on our [Transfer webpage](#).

The Binding Early Decision – JD Transfer application portal will open on our [Apply webpage](#) on **February 20, 2026**. All application requirements must be completed and submitted by **March 23, 2026**.

Candidates will be notified of a decision on their file; this may be an offer of admission, a denial, or the opportunity to remain under consideration through our Regular Decision – JD Transfer Program.

Regular Decision – JD Transfer Program

The Regular Decision - JD Transfer application portal will open on our [Apply webpage](#) on **March 24, 2026**. A complete transfer application consists of several requirements. **Applicants to the Regular Decision – JD Transfer Program are responsible for submitting and completing every application requirement prior to the deadline on June 22, 2026**. We encourage you to apply as early as possible to be considered for admission through the Regular Decision – JD Transfer Program.

TIMELINE FOR APPLICANTS TO BOTH THE EARLY DECISION AND REGULAR DECISION PROGRAMS

The transfer application period is brief by design. Because successful transfer students are eligible to take part in both the Law School's journal write-on competition as well as the on-campus interviewing program (**OCI will only be available to candidates admitted through the Binding Early Decision Transfer program**), we necessarily build in adequate time for these exciting opportunities.

Specifically, after transfer students decide to submit an enrollment deposit with Northwestern Law, they are invited to the journal write-on, and we also introduce new transfer students to their career advisers. In turn, these new students may effectively prepare for OCI-- they write a Northwestern Law resume, develop a bidding strategy, and meet the OCI deadlines.

Because of the accelerated pace of the transfer application process, we strongly encourage you to make arrangements with the registrar's office and/or the dean of students' office at your current law school to have several required documents sent to our office's main email account.

Please review the following instructions carefully and check the email account you share within your application materials often. For that matter, please ensure that your email account is set up to receive messages from admissions@law.northwestern.edu.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for transfer admission to our three-year Juris Doctor (JD) program:

- 1) Applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
- 2) Prospective transfer students must have completed a first year (1L) curriculum that is substantially similar to Northwestern Law's, at an American Bar Association-accredited law school.
- 3) Incoming transfer students* must have earned **at least 28 GPA credit hours** (or the equivalent) at an ABA-accredited law school. Successful transfer candidates who decide to enroll at Northwestern may transfer **a maximum of 28 credit hours**. Officers from the Law School's Office of the Registrar will review the final and complete 1L transcripts for the admitted transfer students who have made a commitment to enroll at Northwestern. These officers will determine which courses and credit hours are transferable to Northwestern Law and communicate this information with the incoming/new students.
** Early Decision – JD Transfer applicants **must have earned a minimum of 28 GPA credit hours** (or the equivalent) as of the completion of the first year of the JD program at their originating law school. Failure to demonstrate the successful completion of the minimum credit hours as of June 2026 may result in the revocation of any offer of admission to the Early Decision – JD Transfer Program.*
- 4) Grades below a C or its equivalent will not be accepted for transfer credit.
- 5) Because of the differences in curriculum among law schools, students who are admitted on a transfer basis may not receive full credit for all first-year courses.
- 6) Successful transfer candidates must complete the **final two years of the JD** at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law.
- 7) Applications will only be considered for the academic year beginning fall semester 2026, and successful candidates must enroll as **full-time students**. Northwestern Law does not offer a parttime or an evening program.

DETAILED APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Please submit these materials to the Office of Admissions through our transfer application portal.

Transfer application form

The application for admission should be completed in its entirety.

Resume

The resume should include the relevant professional, academic, and leadership experience that illustrates your transfer student candidacy. Please submit an **updated** resume, particularly as it demonstrates any summer 2026 work experience, externships, or internships.

Transfer Student Personal Statement

The personal statement is your opportunity to introduce yourself to the Northwestern Law Admissions Committee. You may discuss, among other topics, your professional goals and your personal, academic, and career history. Additionally, you may wish to highlight your motivations at this point in your legal education. For example, the Admissions Committee may find it helpful to learn why you are seeking transfer admission at Northwestern Law.

Optional essay(s)

Through an optional essay, you may introduce the Admissions Committee to information about your background and perspectives. In turn, you may build upon the other components of the transfer application and your candidacy.

Responding to the following questions is entirely optional and should not be viewed as required. You may include responses to as many of the three optional essays as you wish or none at all. These are intended to give you an opportunity to provide additional information that you were unable to include in other portions of the application. Please limit your response to each essay that you complete to 1-2 pages, double-spaced, and at least an 11-point font.

1. Describe any experiences in your life or unique qualities you think would benefit Northwestern Pritzker School of Law and/or your classmates.
2. What does public service mean to you and how do you see yourself engaging in public service or pro-bono work to meet the needs of the underserved?
3. Did you face any particular challenges we should know about when considering your academic history or test scores?

1L Writing Sample

A writing sample from your first year of law school is required. Please submit a sample you believe is the best representation of your legal writing skills.

❑ **The Credential Assembly Service (CAS) Report**

Upon the submission of your transfer application, Northwestern Law will contact the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) on your behalf to request your CAS report. Once the request has been made, you will receive an email from LSAC indicating the associated fees that must be paid in order for the report to be successfully sent to the Law School. Please ensure that your LSAT score(s) and all transcripts are on file with LSAC so your CAS report may be transmitted to the Law School efficiently.

❑ **GRE score(s)**

If you matriculated to your current law school as a *GRE-only* candidate, please make arrangements with ETS to have an official GRE score report made available to Northwestern Law. Our GRE code is **2579**. Secondly, please notify us at the time of your application that you will be submitting a GRE score in lieu of an LSAT score. Please send an email to us at the time of your transfer application; the address is: admissions@law.northwestern.edu.

❑ **Application Fee**

A nonrefundable application fee of \$75 is payable through our transfer application portal.

Please make arrangements for the following required documents to be sent directly to the Office of Admissions at our main email account: admissions@law.northwestern.edu. Please Note: Your application will be considered incomplete if any of the following are not on file:

❑ **Letter of Good Standing**

A letter from your current law school must attest to your good standing and must be sent directly from the registrar or records office to the Northwestern Law Office of Admissions. **Because of the relatively short period for both of the transfer admission cycles, we recommend making arrangements with your current law**

school to have this documentation sent to our main email account:

admissions@law.northwestern.edu.

❑ **1L Transcripts**

Official, first year (1L) law school transcripts should be sent **directly** from your current registrar's office to the Northwestern Law Office of Admissions and Financial Aid via email: admissions@law.northwestern.edu.

PLEASE NOTE:

IF you are applying to the **Binding Early Decision – JD Transfer Program**, you are required to submit official law school transcripts as of the completion of your first semester. Because of the application period for the Binding Early Decision Program, the admissions committee will evaluate your performance for your first semester of law school.

IF you are applying to the **Regular Decision – JD Transfer Program**, you are required to submit official law school transcripts as of the completion of your first year. The Admissions Committee will not evaluate your transfer file until we have received your complete 1L transcripts. Thus, please only work your current law school's registrar to release your 1L transcripts to Northwestern Law when you are certain the course hours, grades, grade point averages, etc. are reflected there for **both the fall and the spring semesters of your 1L year**. In our experience, these complete 1L transcripts are not available until early to mid-June at most all law schools.

We strongly discourage the mailing of hard copy transcripts because of the accelerated timeline for the transfer admission season. We also strongly discourage you to submit your law school transcripts through the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) of the Law School Admission Council (LSAC).

For all these reasons, **please make arrangements with your current law school to have your 1L transcripts sent to us at our main admissions email account:** admissions@law.northwestern.edu.

❑ **Letter of Recommendation from a 1L Professor**

JD Transfer applicants are required to submit one letter of recommendation, and this letter must be written by a law faculty member who taught you during the first year of your law school education. Please guide your faculty recommender to submit the letter directly to Northwestern Law's Office of Admissions. The professor must send the letter as an attachment to a message sent from their **law school email account only**. Secondly, they must send the email to the Northwestern Law Office of Admissions main account: admissions@law.northwestern.edu.

