
CALLBACK INTERVIEW FAQs

What is the purpose of the callback interview, and what does it entail?

The callback interview is intended to further explore how well you “fit” with an employer. After a screening interview, your interviewer and the firm’s hiring committee decide whether to invite you back to the firm to meet with partners, associates and recruiting staff. This is known as a “callback.”

A callback interview usually consists of four 30-minute interviews with attorneys from different departments and levels of seniority. Each interviewer will complete an evaluation form about you (including the junior associates who take you to lunch). Everyone you encounter at the firm will also evaluate you. Be courteous to recruiting professionals, receptionists, and other staff members; your ability to get along with support staff is critical to your success in any organization.

How will I know if a firm wants to schedule a callback?

Callback invitations are typically extended by telephone. However, you should still closely monitor your email and mail.

When do firms extend callback invitations?

Some firms – particularly NYC firms – begin extending callbacks the same day as your EIW interview. However, some firms may take up to a month to extend callback invitations, especially out-of-town firms. If you have received less than two callbacks by August 23, please either come to the Office of Career Services drop-in hours or make an appointment.

How do I schedule a callback?

After you receive a callback invitation, you should respond by phone within 24 hours to schedule your interview. Further:

1. Ask if you need to bring your law school transcript, writing sample, and reference list.
2. Indicate your interest in a specific department or division if the firm asks.
3. Let the recruiter know if you will be on a tight schedule (i.e. you have another callback the same day).
4. Mention any dietary restrictions if you are invited to lunch.

How many callbacks should I schedule?

Attempt to schedule your earliest callbacks with your top choices. You should only cancel appointments for later callbacks if you receive an offer from a firm you prefer over the remaining scheduled callbacks.

Do I have to accept a callback invitation?

We encourage you to accept all callback invitations until you receive a summer employment offer. Once you receive an offer, you may promptly cancel your other callbacks via email. Emailing the recruiter allows you to quickly notify the employer while also providing you with a record of your action. By promptly declining a callback invitation, you may provide the interview opportunity for other classmates. Callback declinations should be done by email, so phone calls are not exchanged unnecessarily.

Will I be reimbursed for out-of-town callback expenses?

When traveling for callbacks, adhere to the employer’s guidelines for reimbursement. Some employers will make your travel arrangements for you, while others will reimburse you after you make your own. Firms in the same geographical location may split your expenses. Directly ask the firm’s recruiter any questions about the travel process. You should discuss reimbursement before your callback, and confirm your understanding via

email. If you are traveling for a callback, and interviewed with other firms located in the same city who have not contacted you since EIW, you may inform them that you will be in town. This may expedite their decision about your application. NALP's Travel Expense Reimbursement Form is attached as Appendix E to the *Fall Interview Season Handbook* (in the CSM Career Resources Library).

How do I prepare for a callback?

You should ask the recruiter for your interviewers' names when you call to accept the invitation. If the recruiter does not yet know their names, ask if you may call back the day before the callback. Knowing your interviewers' names ahead of time will allow you to familiarize yourself with the attorneys' backgrounds and name pronunciation, as well as keep an accurate record for your follow-up email. See the *Career Development Resources Handbook* (in the CSM Career Resources Library) for additional interview-prep resources.

What types of questions will I be asked during a callback?

You can expect more in-depth questions in a callback than in your screening interview. You may find yourself answering the same questions for different attorneys at the same firm. Remember that your answers are new to the interviewer and do not get exasperated by repeated questions. See the *Career Development Resources Handbook* for sample callback interview questions, as well as questions you may ask the interviewers.

What is a callback interview lunch?

A callback interview lunch is an occasion for employers to get to know you as a person "beyond the resume" – will they enjoy working over 12 hours a day with you? A lunch is a great opportunity to express aspects of yourself that the formal interview process may hide, such as your sense of humor. However, if you feel too nervous to conduct yourself with ease in a lunch setting, you may choose a callback without lunch. The afternoon callback schedule usually begins at 2:00 p.m., after the lunch hour. Choosing not to lunch with your hosts will not impact the firm's decision-making process. Please refer to the "Table Manners Tips" in the CSM Career Resources Library.

You will usually lunch with associates, not partners, and this is a prime opportunity to get a better sense of the firm's culture. However, as relaxed as the lunch may seem, you should remember you are still interviewing for a job. Associates often participate in hiring decisions and complete an evaluation form following the lunch.

Do firms allow "split" summers?

"Split" summers may occur between 1) two different firms, 2) the same firm's offices in different locations, and 3) a firm and a public interest organization. Firms have their own split summer policies. If a firm allows split summers, their policy will specify how the split must occur (e.g., you must spend the first eight weeks at the firm). You should not mention splitting your summer until after you receive an offer, unless 1) you are directly asked during your callback interview, or 2) if the firm offers public interest split summers and indicates you should express interest during the interview process. If you are considering a split summer, we encourage you to speak with an OCS counselor before your callbacks. To research a firm's split summer policy, view the firm's NALP form (www.nalpdirectory.com) and the list of firms sponsoring public interest split summers in the CSM Career Resources Library.

Should I follow-up after a callback?

After a callback, you should email a thank you note that both expresses your thanks and reaffirms your interest in the firm. You should not send the same thank you note to multiple interviewers at the same firm. If you are unable to personalize each one, you should send the thank you note to one interviewer or to the recruiter, and ask them to extend your appreciation to each of the other interviewers. See the *Career Development Resources Handbook* for sample thank you emails.

What is NALP's "28-day offer rule," and how does this affect me?

Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 28-days following the date of the offer letter or December 30, whichever comes first. You are expected to accept, release or request an extension by the applicable deadline; however, you should make your decision before then. Offers that are not accepted by the deadline will lapse. You are not permitted to hold more than five offers of employment at the same time. Students with three or more offers should speak with an OCS counselor during drop-in hours. See the NALP website for the full text of the "General Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions."

While employers want to adhere to the NALP 28-day guideline, they also do not want an oversubscribed class. An oversubscribed class is also to your disadvantage, as it increases the likelihood of "no offers" at the end of the summer. Since enthusiasm and genuine interest can influence hiring decisions, you should express your strong interest in an employer. You may even indicate that a particular firm is your top choice - if, in fact, it is. However, if you say you will accept an offer if you receive one, you *must* honor that statement. Again, do *not* say you will accept an offer if you do not intend to honor your statement - it is unethical and unprofessional.

How do I find out more information about the callback process?

Attend the "All About Callbacks: The Law Firm Perspective" panel with partners and recruiting personnel on Thursday, August 10, from 12:40 – 1:30 p.m. in the student lounge (6th floor of the DoubleTree Hotel) during EIW. Panelists will address many common questions regarding the callback process. Lunch will be provided. This panel will be recorded and available on the OCS Career Videos website.

When do I need to start reporting callbacks and offers to OCS?

Once you have received a callback invitation or offer, it is *mandatory* that you submit this information to OCS via the Fall Recruiting Survey. You will learn more about the survey after EIW. Completing the Fall Recruiting Survey enables OCS to effectively advise you and your peers through the callback process.

OCS Drop-in Hours

OCS counselors have daily drop-in hours. Drop-ins may be conducted in person or by phone. You may call the front desk at (212) 998-6090 beginning at 9:30 a.m. to reserve a spot for that day's drops.

Monday: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Thursday: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Friday: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.