

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR – The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers Annual Law Student Writing Competition for 2026

The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers is pleased to announce their 2026 writing competition. This competition is open to articles written while the author is an active student at an accredited law school in the United States. Authors may not have graduated from law school prior to December 1, 2025. Graduate students in law school (LLM candidates) are not eligible.

Prizes are as follows: First Place: \$3000; Second Place: \$1000, and Third Place: \$500. In addition, the author of the first-place paper will be a guest at the Annual Induction Dinner where they will be recognized during the evening program. The College reserves the right not to select any article for publication or award any prizes if, in their judgment, the submissions do not meet their standards for outstanding legal writing.

We acknowledge the vast reach of AI especially in the writing of a paper; however, students are strongly encouraged to limit the use of AI to idea generation, editing, proofing and citation management. All submissions will be run through an AI program to scan for plagiarism or breach of copyright.

*Complete rules are attached and should be read in their entirety.
Competition rules can also be found on the College website at
www.laborandemploymentcollege.org.*

**College of Labor and Employment Lawyers
Annual Law Student Writing Competition 2026**

RULES

A scoring rubric, used by the competition judges, can be found on the CLEL website and details the five areas judges focus their review. In addition, the rubric shows the standards for each category and the score associated with those standards. Students are strongly encouraged to review this guide before submitting their paper.

1. Students should choose a subject which can be written about through the legal lens with a **balanced full spectrum legal analysis**. Judges will be grading on the following points and as such, will pay specific attention these questions:
 - **Is the topic relevant, engaging and useful to labor and employment lawyers in their practices?** The article should not be one state centric, rather it should be relevant nationally, or at a minimum, it should compare/contrast the state to the national perspective.
 - **Are competing viewpoints considered?** The author should not submit an advocacy paper, but rather a paper that presents their arguments in a professional, not political or ideological, manner befitting a scholarly work and, therefore, language, tone and treatment of alternative perspectives and points of view should be descriptive and/or analytical.
 - **Is the analysis original, novel, fresh, and innovative?** Is the topic more than a simple description of a court decision or other legal development? Do not rely on a single law review article or other advocacy piece for your entire analysis.
 - **Is the paper well written, with strong footnoting following the Bluebook and providing insightful information?** Citations to the law should focus on primary sources. Secondary sources and media reports should come from sources that are trustworthy and unbiased.
2. Entries will also be evaluated on clarity, including on syntax, grammar and spelling.
3. Students are required to confer or consult with a labor or employment law professor or practitioner on topics.
4. Manuscripts must be the **original** work of a single author and may not have been written for paid employment. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) for anything **other than review is not allowed**. The manuscript may not be under review for publication anywhere at the time it is submitted to this competition and may not be submitted for publication anywhere between the date of its submission and September 15, 2026. If you have not heard from a CLEL representative by September 15, 2025, you should contact the office to determine if you are eligible to submit your paper for publication elsewhere.

5. The text should be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper with one-inch margins on all sides. Footnotes should be in 12-point Times New Roman font, but can be single spaced. The manuscript, exclusive of the cover page, must be between 20 and 30 pages. Do not submit an abstract, endnotes, a table of contents, or table of cases. *Articles must be submitted as two attachments, one in Microsoft Word and one in PDF format.*
6. All citations should conform to The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (20th Edition). Footnotes should be instructive and not merely cite a case or secondary source. **For secondary sources, law review articles are preferred sources over online encyclopedias, blog posts, and social media, unless they are directly relevant to the topic (for example, a situation where a worker was fired for writing a blog post).** If an online source mentions or cites a case, please **cite directly to the original case.**
7. Submissions must have been written while the author was a student at an accredited law school in the United States. Authors may not have graduated from law school prior to December 1, 2025.
8. No person may submit more than one entry.
9. The judges reserve the right not to award any prizes and to reject any or all submissions.
10. Articles must be submitted to swan@laborandemploymentcollege.org, using the subject line "Writing Competition," by midnight (EDT) on **June 15, 2026**. This is a blind review and to assure that competition judges are not provided information on authors' identity, a **separate** cover page must be submitted with your manuscript (see *Student Information and Verification form* - last page of this document). No personal information should appear on the manuscript itself; however, the title should appear at the top of the first page and pages should be numbered. Do not include your name as part of the file names of your Word or PDF documents; instead use a descriptive name related to the subject matter of your article, such as "Free Speech and the National Labor Relations Act," or "Religion and Employment Law."

PRIZES

1. The following prizes are available: First Place: \$3,000; Second Place: \$1,000; and Third Place: \$500.
2. The author of the first-place winning article will be invited as a guest of the College and recognized at the Annual Induction Dinner.
3. The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers may, at its discretion, include a copy of any or all of the prize-winning manuscripts in an issue of its newsletter or on its website.

2026 Law Student Writing Competition

Student Information and Verification

Title:

Author:

Law School:

Graduation Date:

E-mail Address:

Street Address:

Phone Number:

Please read and confirm:

- ▶ I confirm that I am the sole author of this paper and it is my **original** work.
- ▶ I confirm that I did not use artificial intelligence (AI) for the **writing** of my paper.
- ▶ ***If I did use AI, it was for the following purposes:***
- ▶ My paper has not been written as part of any paid employment.
- ▶ My paper is not currently under review for publication anywhere and I will not submit it for publication anywhere between the date of my submission to this competition and September 15, 2026.
- ▶ I have consulted with a professional (professor, attorney) on topic selection.
- ▶ I have read all rules and requirements of this competition and have fully complied therewith.

Student Signature

Date