

Federal Public Defender District of Puerto Rico

Position Announcement # 2024-03
More than one position will be filled

ASSISTANT FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER – APPEALS

The Federal Public Defender, District of Puerto Rico, is seeking two Assistant Federal Public Defenders for its Appellate Unit in San Juan.

ABOUT OUR OFFICE:

We are an office of around 50 employees with more than 25 attorneys. Our attorneys are a good mix of new and experienced lawyers, and we believe heavily in training, on and offsite, and mentorship. Our practice remains on the cutting edge, and we employ experts and technology in most of our cases – including trials. We train our attorneys to be excellent storytellers supported by two non-capital mitigation specialists and eight investigators. Our office is energetic, passionate, and above all else, collaborative. We believe it is through the collective efforts of our attorneys and staff that our office serves its fundamental mission: providing the best defense money can't buy.



San Juan, the vibrant capital city of Puerto Rico, is a hub for music, food, and culture. It's dotted by parks, beaches, concert venues, and museums, and close to rainforests, bioluminescent bays, and secluded islands – a combination of rich history, astonishing scenery, and warm people that make it an easy place to call home.

JOB DUTIES:

Our Appellate Unit passionately protects the rights and dignity of individuals who are charged with and convicted of federal crimes and are unable to afford counsel. Core duties may therefore include: (1) researching, briefing, and presenting argument in District Court, the First Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court; (2) providing direct support to the office's trial attorneys by researching and drafting motions, objections, and memoranda, and arguing in District Court; (3) litigating post-conviction matters, including federal habeas corpus petitions; (4) developing and maintaining proficiency in various areas of law and offering advice and training as needed by the office.

REQUIREMENTS & QUALIFICATIONS:

Applicants must have graduated from an accredited law school, be in good standing and admitted to practice before the highest court of a state, territory, or possession of the United States, and must be eligible to be admitted to practice before the First Circuit Court of Appeals and on motion (under local rule) to the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. This position requires travel within Puerto Rico and within and outside of the United States.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

The successful applicants will have solid legal-research, writing, and oral advocacy skills and be committed to a team-based, client-focused approach to litigation. Applicants should have experience handling complex litigation and be able to undertake representation of clients at every stage of appellate and habeas proceedings. They must be able to communicate effectively with clients, colleagues, staff, government, and court personnel. Applicants should also have a demonstrated interest in appellate work and an exceptional academic background. Federal judicial clerkship experience, especially at the appellate level, is desirable. Spanish-language proficiency is highly preferred.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

Appointment to this position is contingent upon the successful completion of an FBI name and fingerprint check. Federal Public Defender employees are members of the judicial branch of the government and are considered “at will”. This position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. You must be a U.S. citizen or person authorized to work in the United States. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

SALARY AND BENEFITS:

Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications within the guidelines set by the Judiciary Salary Scale for Assistant Federal Public Defenders. If hired, the private practice of law and notarial practice is prohibited. This position is full time with a comprehensive benefits package that includes health and life insurance, vision and dental benefits, flexible spending accounts, paid time off, sick leave and paid leave for all federal holidays. Participation in the Federal Retirement System and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP with up to 5% government matching contributions).

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION:

Our office values diversity and is committed to equity and inclusion, and aspires to create a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, openness, and humility that honors the people we represent. We believe representation is better when members of the defense team have diverse backgrounds and experiences. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to the FPD because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences. We especially encourage applications from members of the BIPOC community, people who have been affected by the criminal legal system, and people from other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups. We are interested in applicants’ talent, intelligence, dedication, and persistence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully – no matter the allegation or circumstance.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

In **one** PDF document, please submit a letter of interest, résumé, three representative writing samples, and three references to:

Federal Public Defender, District of Puerto Rico, Selection Committee

At: candy_d_carbaugh@fd.org.

Email subject line should read: **2024-03 AFD Application**

Preference will be given to applications received by May 5, 2024. More than one position will be filled. This position will remain open until filled and is subject to the availability of funding.

The Federal Public Defender for the District of Puerto Rico Is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We seek to hire individuals who will promote the diversity of the office and federal practice.