

# Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Pennsylvania

## ASSISTANT FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER

Posted: May 22, 2024

Open until filled; preference to applicants who apply by July 15  
Position Announcement # 2024-09

The Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Pennsylvania is seeking a trial attorney to serve as an **Assistant Federal Public Defender** in its Pittsburgh office. The position primarily involves legal representation of indigent persons accused of federal crimes in the United States District Court. Travel to the Erie or Johnstown branch offices may be required. Once hired, the applicant will have the option to work from home two days per week at the discretion of the Defender.

**Responsibilities.** Responsibilities include managing a caseload with cases at varying stages of litigation; preparing pleadings, briefs and motions; appearing on behalf of the client in court hearings and at other related proceedings; developing litigation strategies; meeting with clients, experts, witnesses and family members; and other duties as assigned. A large part of the caseload involves drug offenses, fraud, robbery, firearms offenses, and internet-related crimes.

**Ideal Candidate.** We are looking for someone who is committed to equal justice and willing to fight vigorously for those accused of crimes. We are seeking a candidate with the ability to communicate with people of many different backgrounds, an unflagging refusal to give up in difficult circumstances, strong research and writing skills, the ability to work both independently and collaboratively, and a reputation for personal and professional integrity. An active commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism is expected. Spanish-language proficiency is desirable but not mandatory.

**Requirements and Qualifications.** The successful applicant must be a graduate from an accredited law school. Courtroom experience is preferred, and excellent research, writing and oral advocacy skills are required, as is a demonstrated commitment to indigent defense. The applicant should be prepared to undertake the representation of clients in serious criminal cases and be able to manage a heavy caseload. Travel and working outside regular business hours are essential for the position, as are effective organizational skills and the ability to work in a team environment. Federal Public Defender attorneys may not engage in the private practice of law. The successful candidate will be subject to a general background check and IRS tax check procedure as a condition of employment.

**Salary and Benefits.** This is a full-time position. Salary is based on federal pay schedules and is commensurate with experience. Benefits include health, supplemental dental/vision benefits, and life insurance, as well as 11 paid federal holidays, 13 days of paid sick leave, and 13 days of paid vacation leave annually. (The rate of paid vacation leave increases to 20 days after three years and 26 days after 15 years.) FPD staff can opt to participate in pre-tax Health, Dependent Care, and Commuter Reimbursement programs. The position is covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), including the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), which matches up to 5% of employee contributions, up to a cap. Salary is paid every other week and is subject to mandatory direct deposit.

**Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.** Our office values diversity, 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 seek a lawyer who shares this belief and commitment. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to the FPD because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences. We are interested in applicants' talent, intelligence, dedication, and persistence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully. The FPD seeks applications from a diverse group of qualified individuals in terms of race, ethnicity, nation of origin, culture, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual identity, education, opinions, age, languages spoken, veteran status, disability, religion, and socioeconomic circumstance. We especially encourage applications from members of the BIPOC community, people affected by the criminal legal system, and people from other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

**Application Information.** Qualified persons should submit a letter of interest, a current and detailed resume and a writing sample in **one** Adobe Acrobat document to Lisa Freeland, Federal Public Defender, via email to: [paw\\_employment@fd.org](mailto:paw_employment@fd.org), **using the subject line** "2024-09."

This Office is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

One or more positions may be filled from this announcement.  
Only those applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.

**No telephone calls please.**